The Attack on New Masses *See pages 3 and 22*

FIFTEEN CENTS

February 6, 1940

NEW MASSES

Not So Quiet on the Far Eastern Front

by John Sterne

Warlords of the Press *George Seldes*

Falsifying History *Theodore Draper*

The Bear *Sylvia Townsend Warner*

'Grapes of Wrath' *reviewed by James Dugan*

Camp Lost Colony *Ralph Ellison*

CARTOONS BY GROPPER, RICHTER, REINHARDT, SORIANO

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Between Ourselves

GEORGE SELDES' important articles on the press and Finland will be followed by a vitally significant series of articles by Anna Louise Strong, about her extensive tour of the United States. Rediscovering America, Miss Strong's challenging investigations reveal the true state of the nation in 1940—relief and unemployment, health and the average budget, local and state politics, the labor movement, and the opinion of the average American on the war, Roosevelt, and the permanent crisis of capitalism. Anna Louise Strong is internationally famous for her books on the USSR and China; now she explores her native land with the same social insight and reportorial ability. Inside the USA lies the biggest story of 1940.

A letter from Palm Beach says, "I have been a subscriber to the *Nation* for twenty years, but with the outbreak of the war the *Nation* has lost its backbone; it went over to the warmongers and is helping the Department of Justice to persecute the officials of the Communist Party. I am looking for a magazine with a strong ackbone and hope to find it in NM. nclosed please find subscription for e coming year."

Pinchot

Sylvia Townsend Warner

The author of many novels which are widely popular in the United States, this distinguished English writer has also attracted attention by her energetic work on behalf of loyalist Spain. As a member of the British Committee to Aid Spain she organized the relief work in her territory and also gave all possible assistance through her writings. Miss Warner's most recent novel, "After the Death of Don Juan," grew out of her sympathy with the Spanish people's cause. Last year she attended the Congress of the League of American Writers as an English delegate.

From Boston: "My brother sent us a subscription to NM as a Christmas present, for which gift we are extremely grateful. Please don't let it be late any more as there is no one who needs your magazine more than a Bostonian."

From W. W. of New York City: "Reading an editorial in the January 16 issue of NM, I was struck by the terms of the new treaty between Soviet Russia and Bulgaria. You state: 'Bulgaria will ship hides, rice, tobacco, and hogs in return for Soviet farm machinery, iron and steel products, petroleum, chemicals, and cotton.' Here, it seems to me, is significant proof that the USSR is well on her way toward the economic and social goal that Lenin and his followers planned for. A nation that can afford to export her machinery and other finished products in exchange for the comforts of her people has definitely shown, once again, the soundness of the system under which she lives."

And from a region in the Deep South which the writer describes as "away from civilization," comes this letter: "At this time, when the darkest reactionary forces of the world are uniting against the only working class government, the USSR — when the Diesmen and Coughlins, newspapers and radio, are concentrating all their hate and poison against the working class and its leaders in this country —I feel the necessity of NM more than ever before."

A more hopeful note, also from the South (North Carolina), came in this week's mail: "We are learning to say, 'The Yanks Are *Not* Coming'—and we don't mean the Yanks of GWTW! Concerning the war in Europe and 'poor little Finland,' we can quote Abe Lincoln: 'You can't fool all of the people all of the time.' More power to NM for its help in making these things plainer."

One of the most successful of the NM Forums is conducted weekly in Hollywood under the direction of Tiba Garlin of our West Coast Bureau. Led by Prof. Norman Byrne of the City College of Los Angeles, each week's discussion centers around developments in the international situation. The forum was started four months ago, and audience interest promises to sustain it indefinitely. Next week's discussion will be Wednesday evening, February 7, 8:30 p.m., at the Lido Room, Hotel Knickerbocker, Hollywood.

One of our readers has a nearly complete file of NM for the past three years which she would like to donate to an organization which has need for it. Requests for the file should be addressed to the "Between Ourselves" Department of NM.

Again we ask persons who possess copies of the original *Masses* and the *Liberator* for the years 1911 to 1925 to contribute them to NM. We have urgent need of these magazines, which are completely missing from our files. In replying, please list the numbers of the volumes and issues available.

In our review last week of William Blake's latest book, *An American Looks at Karl Marx,* the price was erroneously given as $5; the book sells for $3.

Who's Who

THEODORE DRAPER, former foreign editor and foreign correspondent of NM, is the author of a book on European affairs which will be published shortly by Modern Age Books. . . . Adam Lapin is Washington correspondent of NM and the *Daily Worker*. . . . George Seldes, whose article in this issue concludes his series on the press and Finland, is a well known foreign correspondent, a former editor of *Ken,* and the author of several books of which the most recent is *The Catholic Crisis*. . . . Ralph Ellison is a Negro writer who has contributed articles and book reviews to NM before. . . . William Blake, author of *An American Looks at Karl Marx* and two best selling novels, *The World Is Mine* and *The Painter and the Lady,* is at work on another novel, dealing with the Civil War. . . . Edwin Berry Burgum is an editor of *Science and Society.*

Flashbacks

MEMO to liberals who have latterly taken to mumbling incoherencies about democracy in Finland: On Feb. 4, 1918, began the uprising against tyranny in that country which Baron Mannerheim put down, murdering upwards of twenty thousand Finns as he did so. . . . February 7 was a big day in the Soviet Union of 1920: The Red Army captured Odessa which, according to the New York *Times* correspondent, "was full of officers, variously estimated at tens of thousands, who appeared to be spending all their time in restaurants and cafes." On the same day in Irkhutsk, Siberia, the White Guard leader Admiral Kolchak was shot by order of the Irkhutsk Revolutionary Council. . . . Horace Greeley, progressive anti-slavery editor, was born Feb. 3, 1811. . . . And here's a footnote on the ruling class solution for unemployment: Governor Kieft of New York hired all unemployed men as soldiers, Feb. 4, 1643.

This Week

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Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification direct to us rather than to the post office will give the best results.

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NEW MASSES

VOLUME XXXIV FEBRUARY 6, 1940 NUMBER 7

To Messrs. Roosevelt, Jackson, et al.

AN OPEN LETTER

THERE are several things you ought to know before continuing your proceedings against NEW MASSES. Public funds which you are wasting in the "investigation" of this magazine (see editorial article on page 22) might well be spared for other purposes. The farmers in Iowa, the migratories in California, the reliefers in Ohio, the sharecroppers in Mississippi—they do not grow fat on a harvest of subpœnas to the office of NEW MASSES.

This magazine is "owned"—by its readers! It is not and never has been owned by any political party. It is an independent cooperative magazine which has been, since its inception in 1911, the expression of a progressive group of men and women from all parts of the United States. They are united by a common belief in the extension of democracy in every phase of American life. They are united in their desire for peace, for civil liberties, and for the cultural and economic betterment of the plain people in this country.

These readers are the "stockholders" of NEW MASSES. They vote confidence in it from year to year. Only by their alert and continual decision can any writer contribute to the magazine, can the magazine itself exist. They are not your kind of stockholder, Mr. Dies. Year after year, they subscribe to our losses, Mr. Jackson. The only coupons they clip, Mr. Roosevelt, are the subscription blanks which swell the number of our audience.

This year our common enterprise is declaring a dividend—a $5,000 dividend. Because of our increased circulation we require not $30,000, as last year, but $25,000. We have to raise less, but we have to raise it much more quickly. 1940, as we have been saying for many months, will be a crucial year. 1940 is here. It confronts us all, it confronts the entire people, with crucial decisions. In *ordinary years,* NEW MASSES might have made an *ordinary* appeal to its stockholders. This year is different. We all understand the difference. You have helped us understand it, Messrs. Roosevelt, Dies, Jackson, et al.

Your effort to put this magazine out of business will fail. For it is not a run-of-the-mill magazine that you are working against. It is a large body of determined and faithful American readers. Contrary to the cynical assumptions of your profiteer minds, the American people will solidly support an enterprise, even at a financial sacrifice, provided that it speak out boldly against war and reaction. You cannot erase this devotion to ideals by calling it Red. You cannot subdue a passion for peace by calling it a Conspiracy. Your predecessors tried it during the last war. It is *we* who are telling the story.

We are calling upon the stockholders to raise $25,000 in record time. This, we know, will be the best *political* reply to you, the only reply which the profit-minded seem to understand. Our readers will be planning house parties, discussions, and theater parties for the benefit of NEW MASSES. They will get every one of their friends, neighbors, fellow workers, and professional associates to subscribe at once. They will set drive quotas. They won't sit back and watch *their* magazine smothered by the hate which your pettifogging subpœnas signify.

Gentlemen, you are picking not on a few officers of the magazine, but on many thousands of readers. Watch their dimes and quarters and dollar bills—their dividends of devotion—roll into the magazine. We are confident that they will provide the conclusive answer to your "investigations." And they will provide it quickly.

The Editors.

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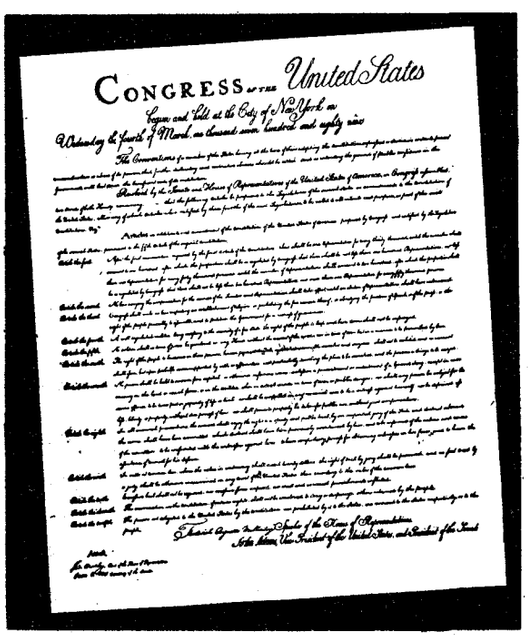
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GOINGS ON

JOHN STARK, Editor New Masses, speaks on WHAT'S HAPPENING INSIDE SPAIN TODAY, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2nd, 8:15 P.M., Progressive Forum, 430 Sixth Avenue. Admission, 25c

MILTON HOWARD speaks on ROOSEVELT, THE WAR AND THE NEW DEAL this SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2:45 P.M., at Irving Plaza, Irving Place and 15 Street. Admission 35c. Auspices: Workers School.

ALFRED GOLDSTEIN reviews the News of the Week. Every SUNDAY EVENING, 8:30 P.M., at Irving Plaza, East 15 Street and Irving Place. Auspices, Workers School. Admission 25c.

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"Cradle Will Rock" plus "Life in the Day of a Secretary," by Hays and Kleinsinger. New School for Social Research, 66 West 12 St. Sat. night, Feb. 10. Tickets 55c to $1.10, New Theatre League, 110 W. 47 St., CH 4-8198.

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Oystrakh, one of the young people made famous in the international contests in Warsaw, Vienna, and the Ysaye contest in Brussels in 1937 in which he and four other Soviet youngsters captured all the main prizes except the second. Oystrakh has given the reason for the musical renaissance in the USSR:

My youth was spent during the civil war, during the years of hardships and devastation. I remember that as soon as Odessa was occupied by the Red Army, the group of gifted young musicians studying under Stolyarsky received special food rations. This was a great help. But even more important to us was the feeling we now had that we were necessary, not only to ourselves and our parents, but to the country. And it is with a gratitude I shall not forget as long as I live that we accepted this first sign of the paternal solicitude of the Soviet government. Since then, like my fellow workers in the sphere of art, I have felt more deeply with each passing year the devotion and solicitude of the Communist Party and the Soviet government.

The vocal works include Rimsky-Korsakov's "Not the Wind's Breathing" and "In the Silence of the Night," sung by I. Kozlovsky; Glinka's "I Remember the Delicious Moment," from the words of Pushkin, sung by S. Lemeshev; Tschaikovsky's "If I Could Express in One Word," and "Side by Side," sung by I. Zhadan; and two pieces from Gounod's *Faust*—"Mephistopheles' Serenade" and "The Calf of Gold," sung by A. Piragov with the orchestra of the Bolshoi Theater. The performances are of the highest caliber.

The line between professionalism and amateur music is indefinable in the USSR. Factories, collective farms, and provincial towns have their own highly developed choruses and orchestras, such as the orchestra of the People's Commissariat of Defense which sings and plays Pokrass' "Red Moscow" march. "Sport March," from the film *Goal Keeper,* is rendered by the Chorus of the Leningrad Radio Committee with "jazz" accompaniment by J. Skomorovsky's ensemble. Soviet "jazz" has little similarity to the American brand, which the Soviets very much admire. The jazz band in the USSR is set up rather like an old-fashioned American minstrel show, with a chorus, orchestra, specialty dancers, and singers, using syncopated and infectious versions of the various Soviet folk music forms.

Four sides of provincial music, including the Armenian opera *Anush,* and the Georgian folktune, "Suliko," and "Dariko," from a Georgian film, illustrate the healthy state of regional art.

Technically, as well as in performance, the records are very fine. Although the Soviet recording technicians still have a knotty problem in getting separation and balance in the recording of large choral ensembles like the Red Army Singers, the solo and orchestral works compare with the best American and European work. The discs are solid and durable, indicating no skimping on quality. These first Soviet recordings to reach America are eminently worth your attention.

J. S. BIXLER.

Entire Set of Seven Issues of John L. Spivak's Smash Expose of Charles E. Coughlin and the CHRISTIAN FRONT Are Now Available at a Special Price!

The Circulation Department of NEW MASSES is pleased to announce that as a special service to readers, the entire set of articles by John L. Spivak on Father Coughlin beginning November 21 and ending with the issue of January 2 is now available for order. Price 70 cents for the full set of seven articles! In response to numerous requests, we also wish to announce that full sets of the Spivak articles, *which will not be published in pamphlet form,* are available for mailing to your friends and acquaintances at no extra charge. Simply send in the list of names, indicate where the full set of articles is to be sent, and enclose 70 cents in stamps or money order.

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vigilantes, told in the painful language of experience. There is Tom Joad's perplexed question about "Reds," who seem to be all around him, according to the vigilante propaganda. The vintage is being trampled.

The right is going to make Darryl Zanuck's risk precarious. This picture will be attacked as the book was attacked and banned. Already in California Associated Farmers have produced a reply called *Plums of Plenty,* but they realize the folly of using mere counter-propaganda against the truth. Their agenda reads, *"Suppress 'Grapes of Wrath.'"* There are many ways to do it, sabotage being most likely. *Blockade* was sabotaged in the distribution apparatus and by the condemnation of the Legion of Decency. Just before the last imperialist war, two democratic films, *Intolerance* and *War Brides,* were suppressed a few months after release. It is too early to see the actual fascist tactic that will be used on this film, but it is not too early to get ready for it. This is a damnably dangerous film for the Roosevelt war-and-hunger budget that keeps ten million Joads in their misery. Indiscreet questions will arise in the audience. Mass pressure and the honesty of the people who have created this magnificent motion picture have given it to us whole. We must defend it in the name of culture and democracy.

JAMES DUGAN.

Sunny Side Up

Elmer Rice's new play, "Two On an Island."

IN PLAYS he wrote some years ago, Mr. Rice seemed to have some convictions about his fellowmen; especially about the necessity under which most of them labored to live from day to day in conditions that would not be tolerated by intelligent breeders of livestock. He was a "socially conscious" playwright, but never a particularly brilliant one, and he incurred the wrath of the critical fraternity. He incurred so much wrath that he wrathfully announced he would never write another play, and he retired from the scene. Now he is back again, with a thing called *Two On an Island,* at the Broadhurst, and the critical fraternity is greeting him with mild, if generous, praise, for a "mellow" appraisal of human life on this island.

This is a charade in eleven scenes, that more or less cover assorted aspects of the New York scene, the night club sector, the theatrical offices, the art galleries, the Statue of Liberty, the coffee-pots. The "social consciousness" is still here, but it is distinctly watered down to the exigencies of commercial success, and the moral of the whole is: don't be discouraged; never be discouraged by unemployment and lack of opportunity, by reverses and hard knocks; keep on going, get tough, keep your chin up and you will succeed. The success may only mean marriage to the gal you love and a two-by-four hall-bedroom, but you'll have each other. It is all pretty innocuous, dripping with treacle, written for a mental age of fourteen by a mental age of seventeen, and Mr. Rice was in the lobby, receiving the congratulations of his friends.

Betty Field is the girl (very cute) and John Craven the boy (very clean-cut) who storm the topless towers of Manhattan, she to become an actress, he a playwright. Mr. Rice takes them for a ride in skeletonized taxicabs, on sightseeing buses. Luther Adler, cast as a Broadway theatrical wolf, tries vainly to make the girl, finally buys her and her husband-to-be a bottle of champagne to go with their canned beans. You gotta be tough, he says. They know it. He gives her a part in his new play; he has given her boy friend a $35 job as his playreader, and off they go to Niagara.

Many and assorted bits wander the streets of New York, some of them well observed (after a blueprint yellow on the edges)—the refugee actor, the sweet old Jewish lady, Mrs. Levy (the finest and only creative performance in the play—Dora Weissman is the actress), the wealthy parlor-pink who finally marries a rich society girl; the taximen, the sightseeing barker (good job by Howard DaSilva), the tarts, the cops, the subway riders. You will not care very much from one scene to the next what is going to happen. But Jo Mielziner's sets are charming.

"YOUNG COUPLE WANTED"

A harmless little comedy—that probably will not survive the cold Broadway weather—opened at the Maxine Elliott: Arthur Wilmurt's *Young Couple Wanted.* The author is somewhat concerned with the plight of the unemployed, and puts his young couple through the paces. Parental insistence makes the pair marry; but that doesn't seem to help much. Enter bright idea—to start a jam business (grape and peanut!) that will bring husband Jed's brother's wife's farm-product to the city consumer. A strike prevents the delivery of cartons, and the jam is spread thin. Solution—back to the farm.

ALVAH BESSIE.

Soviet Music

The first phonograph recordings from the USSR.

A GROUP of ten-inch phonograph recordings, prepared in the USSR especially for the New York World's Fair, is now available in the music stores. The works have been chosen to show the great variety of Soviet music and musical artists, from the magnificent choral group, the USSR Red-Banner Ensemble of Red Army Songs and Dances, to opera and solo classics. The Red Army chorus presents two sides of accordion trios, and four of choral compositions accompanied by trumpets, accordions, and rhythm instruments. "Tachanka" and "If War Breaks Out Tomorrow," a song made popular in the film of the same title, are particularly attractive.

There are four violin solos by young artists, including Chopin's *Mazurka,* played by David

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ie began to sketch in *Blockade* and *Young Mr. Lincoln*. Jane Darwell as Ma Joad, the immortal matriarch of an age of broken families; John Carradine as the ex-preacher, Casy, who has seen a truth more blinding than Holy Writ; and Russell Simpson as the harried father, have done equally fine work. Rosasharn, played well by Dorris Bowdon, is deemphasized but not lost, in the first time a pregnant woman has been shown on the screen. Charley Grapewin as Grampa, and a beautiful bit by John Qualen as Muley, the evicted sharecropper, are smaller roles.

WHY WAS IT MADE?

The social importance of *The Grapes of Wrath* is the real story. One wonders how such a picture could have been made in monopoly Hollywood. First, and foremost, producer Darryl Zanuck knew from the book's success that the film version would make money. Most of the political considerations of the capitalist film arise from this simple commercial urge for profit. Profits are made most pleasantly in the form of reactionary propaganda, but certain producers have been keen enough to realize even more money can be made from progressive films, such as *Blockade, Juarez,* and *Boy Slaves*. Zanuck has produced many contemptible pictures, chiefly his British empire mash notes, but he was also the producer of one of the first social films of the sound era, *I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang*. The cinema industry, arriving late in capitalism, still has a certain commercial daring and enterprise, long since dead in ponderous brother monopolies. Risk is a word still used on the ledgers of the film factories, and successful risks are called "showmanship." Showman Zanuck knows there is a tremendous audience for truth, but his political risk is great. National attention was focused on the making of the picture, and Zanuck, importuned by California reactionaries to bowdlerize the picture, went out and took a look at the "Okie" camps. This was probably the first time in history that a major producer saw the raw stuff of his subject matter. John Steinbeck insisted in his contract that he okay the film, and advisers were engaged who had worked in the camps. This, plus the fact that John Ford's stubborn integrity stood in the way of perverting the film and ensured the organization of a fine cast and technical crew, brought forth a film worthy of the finest traditions of American art.

However, Hollywood produces more than three hundred feature films in an average year —banal, stupid, commercialized, demagogic films, beneath contempt were they not such powerful influences on the national temper. Balance *The Grapes of Wrath* against this swarm of atrocities before deciding the revolution is here.

But *The Grapes of Wrath* is here, a film which presents the humble mass, its misery and exploitation, and the details of capitalist rot, a film which ends on Tom Joad's speech of dedication to fight for the people. Here is the economics of a strike, of evictions, and

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S I G H T S A N D S O U N D S

The Great American Film

John Steinbeck's "The Grapes of Wrath" comes to the screen as a motion picture masterpiece, unadulterated, uncensored, and triumphant. A film to rally around.

JOHN STEINBECK'S revolutionary novel has become a revolutionary film.

There is little film tradition for *The Grapes of Wrath;* one realizes when seeing it how impoverished and deformed other Hollywood films are, how imprisoned are the creative talents of our film workers. John Ford, the director, has made superb films before; Nunnally Johnson, who did the screen adaptation, is a respected craftsman; the actors have shown to advantage in previous films; but never have they had the freedom and the material to make the unsurpassed picture this is. The movie, in a rare moment of sanity, has stopped gibbering and posturing and has stood up in honesty and compassion to speak a powerful truth about American life.

REALISM AND REALITY

One detail of our outrageous time, the plight of the migratory worker of the American West, moved Steinbeck to the novel that has been called a second *Uncle Tom's Cabin,* and by a capitalist contradiction the fire and honesty of the book have come through the devious Hollywood process without perversion.

The screen play selects and compresses certain narrative passages like the Joad hegira from Oklahoma to California, and minor characters like Tom's older brother. The original sequence is sometimes rearranged and characters given speeches belonging to others in the book; but never for the purpose of distorting or of pulling teeth. The script bears out Heywood Broun's objection to the book's profanity, because Charley Grapewin's Grampa is quite as salty without the maledictions. The overly lurid closing scene of the book, involving Rosasharn and the old man, is omitted. Instead, her child has not been born and she is carried off in the truck with the child old in her womb, the promise of new life but not its presence.

John Ford, director of *The Informer, Stage Coach,* and *Young Mr. Lincoln,* achieves his masterpiece in this picture, a piece of creative work he can proudly show to Dovchenko and Pabst, the fruit of an opportunity other directors can rightly envy. There are no cliches in the direction, and scenes like the Joad males poking fun at the pregnant Rosasharn are character statement such as has never been seen on the American screen. Steinbeck and Johnson gave the director much to begin with and Ford has realized his chance to make a masterpiece. My pet theory that freeing the camera to the open air and sunlight and taking off the actor's false-face, two factors confined to documentaries heretofore, gives *The Grapes of Wrath* its stanch base in reality. Realism is a word arising from the imposed artificiality of literature and stage; the movies are only a lens between life and consciousness. To paraphrase Dovchenko, *The Grapes of Wrath* is not so much realism as reality.

The American land, varied and continental, has had its poets in Thomas Wolfe and Walt Whitman and schools of regionalists, in words and paint. Now it is seen lovingly by the motion picture camera. Gregg Toland's photography is a motion picture use of the documentary still photography school well developed in this country. It may return to Hollywood popularity the natural air of the primitive period and the Westerns which has been smothered by the phony sound stage set.

The use of the sound track is worth paragraphs of praise in itself. Alfred Newman's score for guitar and occasionally, I suspect, the harp, is used sparingly and rigorously kept from cueing emotional scenes in the usual banal way. The score consists almost entirely of variations on *Red River Valley.* Speeches have been kept to a colloquial mode, naturally spoken, often low and halting. Incidental sounds occur as illogically as they do in life—a lonely dog barks in the night as Tom Joad says the final goodby to his mother, and cicadas wheedle their unflagging notes in the mists. Ford has always been aware of the dramatic effectiveness of sound, and, more importantly, of silence; the silences of Tom Joad's last night with his shattered family deepen the suspense immeasurably. Once there is a startling long shot of the Joad caravanserie starting up after a halt on the journey. The overloaded truck's front wheels spring off the ground, accompanied by a sudden squeal from the women.

Only one of the sets, the Oklahoma homestead, has the false note of the sound stage, but it is used too briefly to hurt the effectiveness of the migratory camps. Sets, costuming, and casting seem to be acrid reality.

The acting is individually and collectively a new mark for an American film. Henry Fonda as Tom Joad gives a superb portrayal of the working class youth, a characterization

REAL SHARECROPPERS *see themselves in "The Grapes of Wrath." In front of the N. Y. Rivoli Theater, Harry Koger, president, Texas Tenant Farmers; Rev. Owen W. Whitfield, national vice president, CIO Sharecroppers Union; Mrs. Whitfield; Mrs. Elvira Dale, Arkansas sharecropper leader; and Blanche Fischer, sixteen-year-old daughter of the state president of the Missouri Sharecroppers Union.*

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Here suspicious emphasis is placed on Hillman's "reasonableness" with employers and government officials whom labor helped to elect. "Hillman," says Soule, "believes that labor should not ask too much of its friends."

On occasions Hillman has prevented a generous employer from making concessions that would be injurious to the industry. And on other occasions he has made concessions in conference that on second thought he has decided would be impossible for the workers to swallow, and has obtained reconsideration by showing the employer that this was the case.

Soule recounts a conversation between Hillman and a large employer in the clothing industry:

"The pressure is getting too strong," said the union president. "I can't hold the members back any longer. If something is not done, we'll have trouble. What do you recommend?"

"Well," replied the employer, "I suppose we'll have to give an increase. Let's negotiate a 10 percent raise."

"I'm afraid they wouldn't accept that," Hillman said. "They'll be sure to insist on 15 percent."

Soule proves his point, all right. But the point may not be well taken in many quarters.

S. G.

Apologia for Nazism

BATTLE AGAINST TIME, *by Heinrich Hauser. Charles Scribner's Sons. $3.*

HEINRICH HAUSER, the popular German writer of sea tales, writes an ostensible attack on Hitlerism, questioning above all, its duration. The book reminds one of the procedure of the hunted atheists of the seventeenth century who spread their doctrines by citing the arguments for atheism in seven hundred pages and then supplying a miserable paragraph or two of "crushing" refutation at the end. This literary effort should be dear to Goebbels' heart (or what functions as such in that shrunken anatomy), for, in a carrier of superficial criticism, it is one of the most subtle, potent apologias for the Nazis, and infuses their prejudices by the hypodermic route throughout the book.

Direct Nazi propaganda being wholly unsalable at the moment, the new dodge is to utilize the popularity of criticism. But the thin soprano note of criticism (or rather castrate note) is drowned by the obbligato of bass exposition of the Nazi chorale. It is possible of course that Hauser is a Nazi disenchanted by several unforeseen developments.

The study of German economy is pathetic and amateur. Obviously a novelist who has accepted the Nazi universe, but who wonders at the faults of its present leadership, needs a new idol. He has found him. His name is Goering. There is a full-length song of praise. It omits trifling details such as the incarceration of Goering in a mental home in Sweden, the Reichstag fire, and the foul insults to Dimitrov. But Siegfried was a rude and dubious fellow.

WILLIAM BLAKE.

The Road to Rome

THE IDEA OF A CHRISTIAN SOCIETY, *by T. S. Eliot. Harcourt, Brace & Co. $1.50.*

IT IS no longer possible to accept T. S. Eliot as a literary figure or a literary influence.

Under cloak of the theory that contemporary culture must recover its basis in religion, Eliot is now setting himself up as a lay teacher of religious principle. But unfortunately for his influence outside England (where muddled thinking is a middle class virtue), he is assuming the role at a time when his own basis is far from secure. Like Cardinal Newman before him, he is trying to find a "via media" in the Anglican Church when he is actually drifting towards Roman Catholicism.

If Eliot does not go the whole road with Newman, it will be because, as a convert to Anglophilia, he is overawed by the fact of the Establishment, and, as an ex-symbolist poet, he is incapable of the clear definition without which Newman could not rest content.

The skepticism of his early poetry, however, permits him to start from scratch; he recognizes as frankly as any radical the bankruptcy of liberalism, its impotence in practical affairs. He warns against Buchmanism as an insidious forerunner of fascism. He does not find any difference between the Protestantism that supports Hitler in Germany and English Evangelicalism. He sees the necessity for some kind of discipline, and opposes no political ideology on this score, but remains enough of a liberal to desire that the discipline be self-imposed as a result of the leaven of religious teaching within the individual.

The possibility of such a discipline the author finds in the Established Church. The church, according to Eliot, should nurture a "community of Christians" and these laymen will manage society with such high purpose that the minority of unbelievers will only serve as a fillip to their zeal. But it is curious to note that the only authority whose writings he can accept without qualification is the pope, though the reference to him is buried discreetly in the debris of an appendix.

Eliot is too involved with these spiritual affairs to leave it more than an inference running throughout his book that a little totalitarianism in the economic sphere might relieve unemployment and other ills which interfere with the tranquillity of the spiritual life. When the modest Anglican unction he still retains is cleared away, when the labyrinth of quibbling distinctions within which he takes shelter from the harsh proletarian winds is recognized for what it is—the real fabric of his thinking is pretty well exposed as that "Christian fascism" which Franco pretends to follow and towards which the hierarchy of the Catholic Church itself seems disposed with no little wile and embarrassment to push the unwilling masses of its adherents.

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State;—if that's what you are talking about, no thank you."

"That's right," says Kat, "you've said something for once, Tjaden. State and home-country, there's a big difference."

"But they go together," insists Kropp, "Without the state there wouldn't be any home-country."

"True, but just you consider, almost all of us are simple folk. And in France, too, the majority of men are laborers, workmen, or poor clerks. Now just why would a French blacksmith or a French shoemaker want to attack us? No, it is merely the rulers. I had never seen a Frenchman before I came here, and it will be just the same with the majority of Frenchmen as regards us. They weren't asked about it any more than we were."

"Then what exactly is the war for?" asks Tjaden.

Kat shrugs his shoulders. "There must be some people to whom the war is useful."

"Well, I'm not one of them," grins Tjaden.

"Not you, nor anybody else here."

"Not you, nor anybody else here." There in a nutshell is the reason why writers, like other people, are being persuaded to concern themselves with a fiction called permanent reality. For literature will not go all the way back to 1914, any more than the present war goes back to 1914. The war in Europe today takes up where it left off. Literature will take up where Remarque and Hasek and Andreas Latzko left off. It will not content itself with portraying the physical horrors of war. It will, if it is at all honest, be anti-war in a profounder sense; it will answer the questions of Tjaden and Kat.

SAMUEL SILLEN.

Japanese Testament

RESTLESS WAVE. MY LIFE IN TWO WORLDS, *by Haru Matsui. Modern Age Books, Inc. $2.50.*

THE life which this book describes is like that of an artist who takes the world of daily experience and transforms it with intelligence and imagination. To break through the shell of a dying culture, to see through its outward charm to the ugly realities underneath, and to reject a way of thinking in which one's whole childhood and youth have been wrapped, is also a creative act.

Haru Matsui tells mostly of her life in Japan. Her story is particularly valuable because it does not describe Japanese customs and values merely as external restraints which the conscious individual can strive to throw off without altering his personality. Such a dying culture fetters not only the arms, but the mind as well. When they are broken, it is another, a changed person who walks about freely. Haru's father, like all Japanese liberals, thought that by taking half the shackles off, buying some Western furniture and sending his daughter to a progressive school, he would fulfill his obligation to the "new ideas." For Haru these were only the concessions which the feudal world made to the needs of imperialism. Only the form of submission to authority had changed. Haru's break with her family was inevitable.

Systematic theory, of course, played little part in her revolt. But intelligence did. The young lady who visited the slums and mills on a school tour learned much more than her friends. She understood still more after the earthquake of 1923, when four thousand Koreans were massacred in Tokyo through police provocation, and hundreds of prostitutes and factory girls were burnt because their guards would not allow them to escape. Not long after she was attending meetings of the Farmer-Labor Party. In 1929 she was arrested and questioned because of her "dangerous thoughts." A year later she left Japan.

The second part of the book describes her arrival in America; her meeting and life with the artist, Eitaro Ishigaki, her husband; the sorrow of losing two children at birth; her concern with the war in China and her activity in America on behalf of the Chinese people. Her delicate clear style has much of the economy of Japanese writing; it always implies more than it says and is doubly moving thereby. And for all its gentleness there is not one note of despair or defeat in this book. She knows that:

> Around me there are many people moving in a single tide, their warm hands clasping mine. And I know that the time will come when the voice of my people, like silent buds growing unseen under snow, will burst forth gloriously, in triumphant unconquerable spring.

When so many fine weather friends of freedom are apologizing for their former allegiance to the working class, it is good to read the words of quiet, fearless people who have not closed their minds and hearts. Haru Matsui is one of these. Her book is a glowing and courageous testament.

CLARENCE WEINSTOCK.

Labor Leader

SIDNEY HILLMAN, *by George Soule. The Macmillan Co. $2.50.*

IT IS good to know that labor leaders, too, are subjects worthy of biography. Properly handled, studies of the histories, politics, and personalities of the men at the head of the American labor movement would be distinct social contributions. That, alas, can't be said of Mr. Soule's study of Mr. Hillman. Monotoned, pedestrian in writing, it has all the qualities of a campaign biography batted out by a publicity man in mad haste to make a deadline. For better or worse, Mr. Hillman deserved more detailed, perceptive treatment.

The book traces the career of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers' president from his boyhood in czarist Russia, slurring over with near-apologetic fashion his revolutionary years, to the latter period of Hillman's "statesmanship." Paying tedious attention to the formula of the impartial chairman, credited to Hillman in the old Hart, Schaffner & Marx days in Chicago, Soule finally brings us to the New Deal period in which, the author believes, Hillman's labor statesmanship reached its apogee.

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R E V I E W A N D C O M M E N T

The Specter of Mutiny

A New York "Times" critic asks "Shall we have a war literature?" and does not stay for an answer. The power and the glory depart from literary prophecy.

"SHALL we have a war literature?" asks Charles Cestre in his Paris Letter to the New York *Times* Book Review Section for January 21. His answer lacks confidence. Perhaps, he suggests, it is not even desirable that there should be a large quantity of war literature. "War, after all, like sickness, is a painful accident in the life of a nation." Since literature is concerned with "permanent reality" rather than with such accidents, M. Cestre believes it is reasonable to expect that writers will not allow "the readers' absorption in grave preoccupations" to interfere with their art. Life is short and art is long. How much more true in time of war!

It is instructive to compare this view with that of the French war enthusiasts in 1914. Maurice Barres hailed the war as a splendid opportunity for writers to exploit the really important and romantic subjects: blood, voluptuousness, death. Paul Claudel pledged his meager talents to the military in a rapturous ode entitled "Tant Que Vous Voudrez Mon General." Jean Giraudoux, the present minister of information, opened one of his war books, *Adorable Clio,* with "Forgive me, O war, that—whenever I could—I have caressed thee. . . ." Mystics and decadents, chauvinists and reactionaries of all stripes, welcomed the grand theme. Here at last was the supreme antidote to ennui and materialism. Here at last was a fountain of inspiration which would refresh the literature of France.

Why is this confidence absent today? Because, among other things, it is not easy for writers to forget that the sublime prophecies of 1914 were unutterably ridiculous by 1918. The fountain spouted blood, and blood does not refresh literature but poisons it, as even the Nazis should have discovered by now. Literary historians on both sides of the Rhine long ago agreed that the last war was a cultural catastrophe. In his *Modern German Literature,* Arthur Eloesser writes that "On the outbreak of war literature became silent, or had silence imposed upon it." And Regis Michaud, in his *Modern Thought and Literature in France,* shamefacedly reports that "We may well pass the war over as an incident. . . ."

The prophecy of Maurice Barres came true—in reverse. Of the works that appeared during the war years, the only ones that a later generation can respect are those, like Henri Barbusse's *Under Fire,* which indicted the war spirit and discovered human brotherhood through suffering. The hip-hip-hooray poems that appeared in the British and American press during the war are happily forgotten; but the verse of soldiers like Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon remains an inspiration to a new generation of war-haters. And the greatest war books produced after 1918 are, by common assent, those which show the hollow mockery of idealistic slogans, and the reality of senseless and wanton waste. The testimony is overwhelming. Erich Maria Remarque in *All Quiet on the Western Front,* Mikhail Sholokhov in the middle section of *And Quiet Flows the Don,* Ernest Hemingway in *A Farewell to Arms,* Jaroslav Hasek in *The Good Soldier: Schweik*—which of these has "caressed" the war?

"War, after all, like sickness, is a painful accident in the life of a nation." Let's not dwell on it; let's not be morbid; it will pass like a fever. M. Cestre disparages Barbusse's *Under Fire* because it "threw overboard fortitude and cheer, and made it a point to paint only the squalor, horror, and filth. Barbusse's dispiriting naturalism was subordinated to a social-communist purpose, with the result of a picture altered for the worse." In short, Barbusse did not treat the war as an accident. Dispiriting, indeed. For the realistic portrait of imperialist war which we get in *Under Fire* destroyed the confidence of the French masses in the warlords, just as it has taken the confidence out of French chauvinist criticism. Better for writers to concern themselves with "permanent reality" than with the "grave preoccupations" of their readers. Better for writers to grind out the eternal truth of Wells' *Mr. Britling Sees It Through:* "This could be seen as the noblest of wars, the crowning struggle of mankind against national dominance and national aggression: the meaning of England . . . the deep and long unspoken desire for kindliness and fairness. . . ."

W. Clinton

What was "dispiriting" from the point of view of the imperialists was inspiring to Romain Rolland, who was deeply moved by:

> the fact that among these humble folk, among those who, like the third estate in '89, are nothing and shall be all—that in this proletariat of the armies there is obscurely forming an awareness of universal humanity—that so bold a voice can be raised from France—that those who are actually fighting can make a heroic effort to ignore environing wretchedness and imminent death, to dream of the fraternal union of the warring peoples. . . .

Barbusse found the war cruel not merely because of the bloodshed and the terror, but because the men in his squad were fighting *for* their enemies:

> Ah, you are right, poor countless workmen of the battles, you who have made with your hands all of the Great War, you whose omnipotence is not yet used for well-doing, you human host whose every face is a world of sorrows, you who dream bowed under the yoke of a thought beneath that sky where long black clouds rend themselves and expand in disheveled lengths like evil angels—yes, you are right. . . . Against you and your great common interests which as you dimly saw are the same thing in effect as justice, there are not only the sword-wavers, the profiteers, and the intriguers.
>
> There is not only the prodigious opposition of interested parties—financiers, speculators great and small, armorplated in their banks and houses, who live on war and live in peace during war, with their brows stubbornly set upon a secret doctrine and their faces shut up like safes. . . .
>
> There are those who bury themselves in the past, on whose lips are the sayings only of bygone days, the traditionalists for whom an injustice has legal force because it is perpetuated, who aspire to be guided by the dead, who strive to subordinate progress and the future and all their palpitating passion to the realm of ghosts and nursery tales.
>
> With them are all the parsons, who seek to excite you and to lull you to sleep with the morphine of their Paradise, so that nothing may change. There are the lawyers, the economists, the historians—and how many more?—who befog you with the rigmarole of theory, who declare their inter-antagonism of nationalities at a time when the only unity possessed by each nation of today is in the arbitrary map-lines of her frontiers. . . .

No, the war was not a painful "accident," Barbusse tells us over and over again. And the lesson is learned even in the muck of the trenches by plain men who are not concerned with a metaphysical permanent reality. Listen to a conversation of the youngsters in *All Quiet on the Western Front:*

> "State, State"—Tjaden snaps his fingers contemptuously. "Gendarmes, police, taxes, that's your

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Two candidates are machine nonentities: Browder's ardent championship of the needs of the American people has made him a national figure. But because he is general secretary of the Communist Party, because he stands for the interests of labor, he has been indicted, convicted, and sentenced to four years in prison, fined $2,000 for committing no crime. The charge and conviction presage the administration's attempt to undermine civil liberties, to silence Browder's voice, to destroy the legal existence of his party. The man in the street will tell you that, and he knows he is right.

Browder's vote in next Tuesday's election becomes a major political barometer. His name appears on the ballot supported by the signatures of 5,500 registered voters. Intervention by John J. O'Connor, discredited Tammany politician, and Lambert Fairchild, the noisy Republican, impresses no one. About thirty thousand citizens cast their vote in this district last year. In an off-year, special election, it is considered that nine or ten thousand votes will guarantee Mr. Browder's election.

Professor Goldschmidt

THE death of Prof. Alfons Goldschmidt in Mexico City last week was a blow to his many friends and admirers throughout the world. The distinguished economist was one of the earliest victims of the Nazi anti-cultural orgy. A devoted champion of labor and progress, he redoubled his labors during his seven-year exile. The tribute paid to him by Lombardo Toledano on behalf of the Mexican people expressed the gratitude of scholars and workers who had been influenced and inspired by his lectures. He will be remembered, among other things, for his keen understanding of Latin-American affairs and his warm friendship for the Soviet Union. Professor Goldschmidt played an honorable role in the fight of his fellowmen for a better world.

Green Light to Dies

NO PRESSURE came from the White House this year to keep Martin Dies in his place; Harold Ickes let forth a whispering blast well after the roll was called; the Dies committee was continued by a vote of 345 to twenty-one and an appropriation of $75,000. Congressman Hook of Michigan presented documents proving that Martin Dies appeared as chief speaker at a Hotel Biltmore dinner on Dec. 8, 1938, at which Merwin K. Hart was chairman. Hart is a notorious reactionary-at-large; no searchlight is necessary to link him with John F. Cassidy, the indicted Christian Front leader. Other documents tied Martin Dies to Robert Appleton, head of the American Defense Society, who shares an office with Joseph McWilliams, leader of the Christian Mobilizers. Letters were offered implying an understanding between Dies and William Dudley Pelley, fugitive head of the Silver Shirts.

Congress ignored the evidence. While Martin Dies deliberately failed to investigate Charles Coughlin, it remained for the Department of Justice, spurred by the NEW MASSES expose, to begin a belated, hesitant inquiry into the "faith and works" of Silver Charlie. No effort was made by the House to limit the committee's authority, to formalize its procedure, even to criticize its methodical slander and harassment of progressive and labor organizations. Encouraged by the administration's silence and the congressional blank-check, Rep. Parnell Thomas (better known as Feeney) announced that the Dies committee would soon invade Hollywood to continue the smear campaign. Only twenty-one representatives upheld the integrity of Congress by lambasting the spectacle of a committee "investigating un-American activities" whose chairman is definitely in cahoots with American fascism.

In Catholic Poland

CARDINAL HLOND'S report to the Vatican on Catholic persecutions in Nazified Poland must come as a shock to those American Catholic clergy who so vehemently supported Franco's allies in the Spanish Holy War. The primate charged that priests and bishops have been killed by the Gestapo (Father Coughlin's supporters). Nuns have been beaten with rifle butts; churches have been gutted. The clergy is being compelled to say prayers for Hitler at every mass while persecutions are visited upon Catholics more horrendous than Catholic Poland's pogroms upon the Jews several years ago.

Reports last week from the Joint Distribution Committee emphasized similar atrocities against the Jews in Nazified Poland; 250,000 Jews are said to have lost their lives in the German invasion: a fabulous, shocking figure. The pope has charged that conditions in Sovietized Poland were as bad as in the Nazified areas; the evidence contradicts him. Local elections in that area have brought democracy to Jews and Catholics alike. Soviet dispatches report a cultural and economic revival. The Jewish *Morning Freiheit* has been publishing letters received by Jews in the United States describing in detail the full meaning of the fact: "liberation." In the *Commonweal* for December 15, a Catholic priest expressed the opinion that the Roman Catholics will be better off under Soviet rule. In the *Nation* for January 27, Howard Daniel's article, "Mass Murder in Poland," says in part:

> Jews who lived in the Russian-occupied areas or who managed to escape there are better off. With the exception of a small number of upper-class factory owners and business men, the 1,500,000 Jews in what is now Russian territory have not been robbed of their property . . . Nazi authorities have encouraged the mass exodus to Russian territory, and at first the Russians did nothing to stop it. Of late an attempt has been made to prevent any further entry since the number of immigrants is presenting a problem. With the exception of orthodox Jews and Zionists, whose activities are curtailed in Russia, the situation of the newly arrived Jewish population is, considering the circumstances, satisfactory. A case has come to my knowledge of a young Jew whose relatives had all his papers in order for his emigration to the United States. He has decided to stay in the Soviet Union, where a job as a skilled worker has been offered him.

Siren Voices

NEUTRAL nations reacted with indignation to Winston Churchill's appeal for a common front against Germany. Foreign Minister Van Kleffens of Holland received a vote of confidence in the Dutch Parliament after his verbal assault upon those "siren voices trying to involve us directly or indirectly in the war."

Comment from other nations was equally so critical that London was compelled to deny official sanction to Churchill's remarks.

But in the present military stalemate, Allied pressure upon all neutrals constitutes major strategy. Interest centered this week on the Rumanian oil problem. Just before the New Year, a German-Rumanian trade treaty gave the former a 22 percent foreign exchange advantage and a guarantee of 130,000 tons per month of Rumanian oil. In the effort to boost declining production, and meet contracts to all customers, King Carol decreed stringent government controls on oil in the middle of January. But 90 percent of the oil is extracted by foreign companies; three quarters of the capital comes from British, French, Dutch, and American sources. Disregarding Rumanian sovereignty, Sir Reginald Hoare, London's ambassador to Bucharest, this week served notice that England intends to crowd the Reich out of its oil supply. Rumania is a crucial market for Germany; shipments have been hampered by lack of barges, and ice over the Danube. Tass Agency this week vigorously denied French reports that the Soviet Union had permitted German armed occupation of the Polish Galician railway lines; it is true, however, that railway communications, either through the Soviet area or Hungary, become decisive if the oil is to reach Germany. Carol's position is difficult; his show of independence is calculated to afford him the best possible bargain.

Middle East

AS THE Balkan entente meets in the effort to iron out mutual antagonisms that hamper the realization of Allied designs, the French General Maxime Weygand arrived in Ankara, Turkey, for military discussions. *Red Star,* Soviet Red Army newspaper, called attention this week to a concentration of two hundred to three hundred thousand Allied troops in the Middle East.

Says the Soviet correspondent: "The scope of the military preparations of the Anglo-French bloc in the Near East, as well as the all-round diplomatic preparations, leads one to believe that we are not dealing here with simple facts of diversion, restricted in scope and character, but with far-reaching military strategic designs."

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NEW MASSES

ESTABLISHED 1911

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★

Subterfuge Sublime

No better evidence is needed of the devious dangers to American neutrality than the proposed new loan of $20,000,000 to Finland.

By its treatment of this issue, the administration gives ample proof of how underhanded our statesmen are, how guilty their consciences, how well they know what the people think, what the people sense. Originally, F.D.R. invited the Republicans to share responsibility for the loan. They turned him down. Hesitating to ask for the money outright, anticipating the suspicion and fury of the masses, the administration has made a horse trade: Congress is asked to approve the authorization of $100,000,000 in the lending power of the Export-Import Bank. The holy name of Finland will not be taken in vain; sub rosa, Mr. Jesse Jones will extend credits to Mannerheim, that Franco of Finland. F.D.R. will be able to say, cleverly enough, that Congress authorized it. Congress may reply in this election year that the sum was granted by an executive agency. How proud these gentlemen are of their dirty work!

Americans Preferred

Finland is the wedge whereby Roosevelt seeks to pry open the Pandora box of imperialist conflict. Finland is the lever to dislodge the American people from their firm refusal to save in Europe a system not worth saving. How decisive the American initiative has become was emphasized this week when the President sanctioned the participation of American volunteers in Mannerheim's anti-Soviet war. The legal justification had long been prepared. Mr. Jackson had mobilized the law books as early as September 5. Newspaper publicity on American mercenaries in Mannerheim's army delicately reminds the people of what they'll be cheered for, perhaps sooner than they think. Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade will recall what difficulties the State Department placed in *their* path, at what risks they crossed the wintry Pyrenees to defend the cause which the Spanish people found worthy of defense. No government in Europe would dare, without Roosevelt's inspiration, to develop the Northern Front in Scandinavia. This front is real; but perhaps more than we realize, newspaper reports of French and British help to Finland are calculated to help Washington hurry along. A week ago, Nicholas Murray Butler's front organization, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, gravely insisted that the Allies couldn't possibly help Finland; this week they're doing so, by their own boast.

Munitions Dump

American money is crucial for Mannerheim, but the State Department this week revealed that American munitions have flowed in abundance to Scandinavia and Europe. The report of 1939 arms licenses shows an increase to $204,000,000 from $83,000,000 in 1938. What a harvest this represents for American arms manufacturers; what powerful evidence of the price that the peoples of the capitalist world are forced to pay to keep capitalism afloat. New Masses for Dec. 5, written before the Red Army marched, revealed that Finland's arms purchases for October 1939 reached $848,900, almost as much *in that month* as Soviet purchases in the *preceding ten months*. By December, such purchases had risen to $3,154,616—a large sum of money for a government that recently received a $10,000,000 loan for civilian purposes only. Turkey and Sweden are reported as large purchasers, although, of course, England and France account for the unusual jump. How Sweden relies on the American market was underlined this week by the arrival of a mission from Stockholm, headed by Prince Bertil, the king's grandson. He told reporters that his was "a war mission, in a sense, because we are seeking, through what our government calls a mission, to continue our imports particularly of cotton and machinery in view of the situation abroad."

Anti-Trust to Anti-Labor

When Thurman Arnold's appointment as assistant attorney general was being considered by a Senate subcommittee, certain anti-New Deal senators were disturbed because Mr. Arnold, in *The Folklore of Capitalism,* had intimated that the anti-trust laws were a bit obsolete. In the last couple of months the assistant attorney general has been vindicating himself in tory eyes. By grafting anti-labor monkey glands onto the anti-trust legislation he has converted an ineffectual curb on big business into what promises to be a potent bludgeon against the trade union movement.

Mr. Arnold also knows the art of picking victims whom it is difficult for decent men to defend. Joseph P. Ryan, president of the International Longshoremen's Association, and ten other reactionary AFL officials, as well as the unions which they represent, have been indicted on charges of conspiracy to violate the Sherman anti-trust laws. True, the AFL leadership is honeycombed with shady characters whose connection with racketeering is as intimate as it is with reaction. These gentry have been persistently shielded and honored by President William Green. But the job of cleaning out these parasites is one for the labor movement.

The use of the anti-trust laws against trade unions is dictated not by considerations of political hygiene, but by a desire to hamstring labor organization and bring the unions in line with the Roosevelt administration's war program. In a recent letter to the New York *Times* Henry Epstein, solicitor general of New York State, warned that this policy threatens all the gains which labor has won in the last few years. The folklore of law enforcement which Thurman Arnold is now writing throws away the safeguards of the Clayton Anti-Trust Act; it would drag labor back more than thirty years to the dark days of the Danbury Hatters Case. It shows how broad a swath the drive on civil liberties is cutting.

A Job for Every American

Seven hundred and seventy-five thousand workers were fired from WPA last July and August. The Woodrum law had made mandatory the discharge of all workers employed by the WPA for eighteen consecutive months. Editorialists are always telling us that there are jobs if one wants them badly enough; business activity passed the 1929 levels this autumn, but now Colonel Harrington, WPA administrator, discloses that 674,250, or 87.4 percent, of the workers fired last summer had not found jobs by November. Half of those that did were making less than the $14 security wage: some earning as little as $5 per week. This revelation of mass misery becomes an even deeper indictment of the administration when it is recalled that the President's new budget provides for a *further reduction* in WPA rolls. And the business index is already receding.

No wonder the Workers Alliance is reconsidering its support for an F.D.R. third term; in this it joins the United Mine Workers and an increasing proportion of the American people for whom the New Deal has been betrayed by the New Dealers themselves. The Workers Alliance is drafting a bill which embodies a minimum program to meet human needs: jobs for three million by direct federal grant, no work relief tests, the prevailing hourly wage, an average monthly wage of $70 with sectional and technical differentials. Here is a plan which makes sense, which means the beginnings of decency for America's unemployed.

Browder in Washington?

New York's 14th Congressional District embraces most of the East Side slums, old law tenements, dead-end and despair. Three men are running for Congress in the district's special election on February 6. The Republicans offer Louis Lefkowitz, whose claim to fame lies in his defense of racketeers and gangsters in the law courts. Tammany has nominated M. Michael Edelstein, clubhouse politician, who is supported by the American Labor Party's reactionary minority. The Communists have nominated Earl Browder, general secretary of their party.

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The Attack on New Masses

AN EDITORIAL

THE editors of this publication have always considered themselves trustees of the readers in our common venture —NEW MASSES. This magazine began its life as a weekly under those circumstances and we have always labored to strengthen those bonds, inviting your fullest participation in the life of this publication. You have shared its triumphs with us, its tribulations. Whenever it has faced danger we have informed you. You have never let it down, for it is as dear to you as it is to us, and to all whose common goal is the advancement of the people's welfare.

We write to you now to acquaint you with latest significant developments. For the past three weeks this publication has been harassed by a so-called investigation by the Federal Grand Jury in Washington. Certain of our editors, A. B. Magil and Joseph North, have been called before that inquisitorial body. Our business manager, Carl Bristel, has also been hauled before the federal authorities. They took George Willner, former business manager, away from his family and work in California and brought him three thousand miles to Washington. The nature of the questioning indicates that the federal authorities are on a fishing expedition.

The government has reiterated, fulsomely enough, that it stands on the side of the Bill of Rights—that it guarantees freedom of speech, press, assembly. But in this "investigation" we have sufficient reason to believe that its ultimate aim is to harass this publication on so-called "legal," "technical" grounds until it proves impossible for us to continue publication. It is quite obvious that NEW MASSES is being "investigated" not because it has violated any law, but because of its policies. When America entered the last war, the old *Masses* was suppressed. Now that the Roosevelt administration is preparing to take this country into the second imperialist war, it is seeking to cripple and perhaps ultimately to silence NEW MASSES. Of course it is not expedient for an avowedly liberal government to suppress a publication on political grounds, as yet. The authorities have gone into their offensive obliquely, carefully avoiding a frontal attack. It is the shabby technique of gutting the Bill of Rights by subterfuge.

NEW MASSES is the one national weekly magazine in the United States which has pledged uncompromising opposition to American participation in the imperialist war in any form. We are proud of that position. If the Gallup poll is any indicator, more than 95 percent of the American people agree with us. Can it be that this anti-war policy has something to do with the government's sudden interest in NEW MASSES? This magazine has existed as a weekly since 1934, but this is the first time its editors have been before investigating bodies. Is peace criminal?

Former Attorney General Murphy gave the tipoff as to the character of this streamlined witch hunt when he recently issued a letter convoking a grand jury to investigate certain progressive organizations and individuals on charges of "military espionage." So flagrantly did this letter violate elementary legal principles and civil rights that the conservative Washington *Post* rebuked Murphy editorially as follows:

"These individuals . . . are all said to have Communist connections. But their guilt must not on that account be assumed. They have not yet been convicted. They have not been tried. Indeed, they have not even been indicted."

Having expiated the sins he committed when, while governor of Michigan, he gave the CIO an even break and sought Communist advice and support in his campaign for reelection, Murphy has now gone on to his great reward. Will his successor, Robert Jackson, continue his assault on the Bill of Rights?

Americans today are increasingly on the alert. They are beginning to know a witch hunt when they see it. The Roosevelt administration's desertion of its liberal program has been condemned by the CIO and other progressive organizations. The recent defense of the Bill of Rights by sixty-two prominent educators, writers, artists, and public officials shows that thinking America will not supinely tolerate the destruction of democracy. The outrageous sentence against Earl Browder has likewise opened many eyes. Now NEW MASSES is on the firing line. But come what may, *we intend to carry on.* We know our thousands of readers and friends will stand by us.

Modern history abounds in lessons. The Reichstag fire served as the pretext for launching terror against the Communist Party. Before long its flames had consumed the rights of every individual and organization that refused to bend the knee to fascism. In torture, the liberal Carl von Ossietsky and the Communist Ernst Thaelmann were united. Today the brunt of the attack is on us. Tomorrow it may be on all who dare to speak out on any grounds.

We repeat the words proclaimed in the first issue of this year, the words of the pledge which William Lloyd Garrison gave to readers of the *Liberator* in 1831: "I am in earnest. I will not equivocate—I will not retreat a single inch—and I will be heard."

Garrison insisted on being heard; he was driven from the lecture platform and dragged through the streets by the respectable merchants of Boston. Elijah T. Lovejoy's printing press was smashed by a pro-slavery mob in Alton, Ill. But the Abolitionists lived up to their promise. We pledge you to stand by ours. We pledge you to carry on the fight of the old *Masses* against imperialist war. The free press, the Bill of Rights are in danger. Your action can save them. Write to President Roosevelt and Attorney General Jackson in Washington protesting against the efforts to cripple NEW MASSES. We have only just begun to fight. Together, we shall persevere. The truth will be heard.

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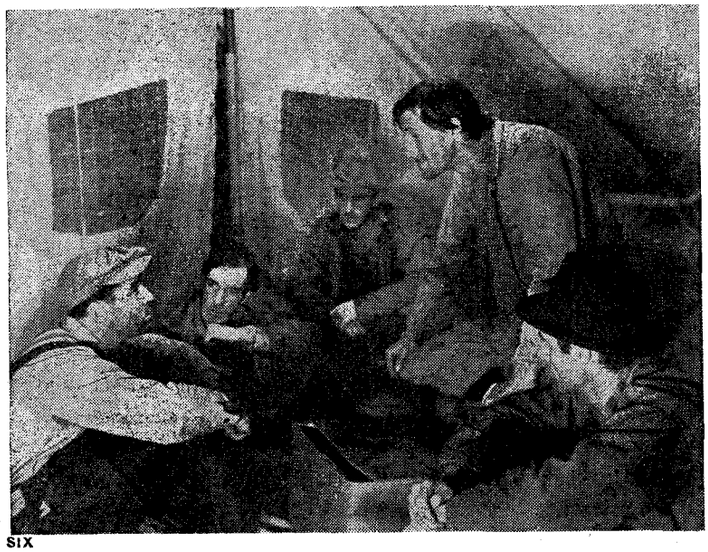
TWO

FACE EVICTION BY BANKERS, *as does neighbor Muley, with shotgun, shown futilely defying the tractor coming to plough through his shack.*

THREE

ON A $75 TRUCK, *the Joads prepare to leave for California where, a handbill has assured them, there is plenty of work at good wages.*



SIX

THEY FIND WORK PICKING FRUIT *and Tom finds the ranch picketed by strikers led by ex-preacher Casy, shown explaining the strike.*

SEVEN

TOM KILLS A VIGILANTE *who has brutally attacked and killed Casy. Back on the ranch Ma nurses his wound as they prepare to flee.*

TEN

DEPUTIES ARRIVE *to "quell the riot" begun by their confederates, but the campers have seized the thugs and everything is peaceful.*

ELEVEN

BUT THE COPS ARE ON TOM'S TRAIL *and he is forced to flee again. He tells Ma he will carry on Casy's work, fighting for the people.*

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The Grapes of Wrath

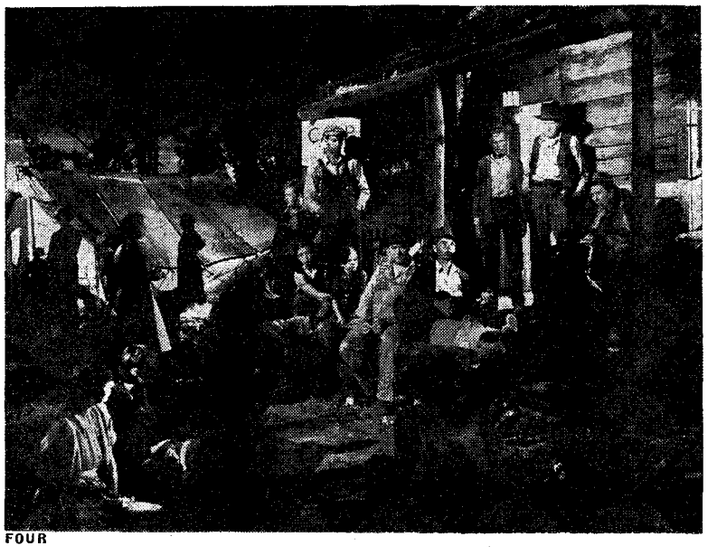
A magnificent film about the struggles of disinherited Americans.

STILL SHOTS taken during the filming of *The Grapes of Wrath* tell the story of the movie adapted from John Steinbeck's novel. James Dugan's review on page 28 of this issue calls it "The Great American Film" . . . "the fire and honesty of the book have come through the devious Hollywood process without perversion."

The principal players, shown in the first photo, are Charley Grapewin as Grampa, Dorris Bowdon as Rosasharn, Jane Darwell as Ma, Russell Simpson as Pa, Henry Fonda as Tom Joad, Darryl Hickman as Winfield, Frank Sully as Noah, Shirley Mills as Ruth Joad, Frank Darien as Uncle John, O. Z. Whitehead as Al, Eddie Quillan as Connie, and John Carradine as Casy. Shown in the other stills are John Qualen as Muley, Zeffie Tilbury as Granma, Grant Mitchell as the caretaker. John Ford directed, Nunnally Johnson adapted the book, Alfred Newman arranged the music, Gregg Toland handled photography, Tom Collins was technical adviser. Darryl Zanuck produced the film for 20th Century-Fox.

ONE

THE JOAD FAMILY: *Grampa, Rosasharn, Ma, Pa, Tom, Winfield, Ruth, Noah, Uncle John, Al, Connie, and Casy, the ex-preacher.*



FOUR

ON THE WAY *they meet other "Okie" refugees and listen in disbelief to the bitter truth about California from a returning traveler.*

FIVE

ARRIVING AT THEIR FIRST MIGRATORY CAMP *in California, the Joads find hungry kids peering into their meager stew. Ma feeds the kids.*

EIGHT

A GREAT SURPRISE *greets the Joads at a government camp, where the caretaker treats them with the first kindness they've had.*

NINE

A SATURDAY NIGHT DANCE AT THE GOVERNMENT CAMP *features refugees of all ages joining in the fun, but thugs invade the camp.*

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ants have taken part in such a discussion. The governor asked that all evictions be restrained until the committee could work out its plans. It was proposed that the Farm Security Administration lease land from the planters on which evicted families could be allotted five to ten acre tracts and portable houses. It asked that the USHA furnish the families with farm implements and seed. The committee hopes to have fifty families installed on such subsistence farms by March. Negotiations are under way, and if successful will help as far as relief measures can. But Congress is in a budget slashing mood; the croppers are alarmed that FSA appropriations may be cut.

Conditions such as these and possible remedies were discussed at the National Cotton Conference called by the UCAPAWA, affiliate of the CIO, at Washington during January 15-17. Delegates from Oklahoma, Arkansas, Missouri, Texas, Alabama, and Louisiana participated. They brought 22,507 signed petitions urging that evictions be stopped, that the conditions I describe be corrected. These petitions were placed in the hands of Secretary of Agriculture Wallace and President Roosevelt. A committee of the croppers met with members of New Deal agencies and some got favorable promises.

Owen Whitfield and his group of sharecroppers from Texas, Arkansas, and Missouri are now in New York relating their experiences to interested groups. They represent part of a nationwide effort by the National Council to Aid Agricultural Workers to awaken the country to the plight of more than three million dispossessed Americans. While in Washington the sharecroppers received a pledge from Mrs. Roosevelt that she would devote one of her newspaper columns to their cause. They hope that the President will turn his attention from Mannerheim Finland long enough to save the measures which sent these American farming people to the polls for him in 1936.

RALPH ELLISON.

Mischa Richter

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its revelation of truths, must cease. Important as is liberty, life is more important. Public opinion must be conscripted. . . . Thinking along independent lines must be stopped. . . . Censorship must prevail.

As for the press:

There must be an abridgment of free speech, free press, free assembly, and even free thought. . . . Only public opinion can win a war. . . . If we take the muzzles off the dogs of war, we must put the muzzles on the people and the press. . . .

All wars are states of mind. It is rare—it is never—that a nation is instantly galvanized into the vast emotionalism that is needed in war. . . .

The regimentation and goosestepping of public opinion is one of the inescapable processes of war making. . . .

The Swope idea is a war plan. I do not know whether it has been officially adopted but I do know that something like it will be enforced the day we get into a war.

But without any edict from the national government, the newspapers and radio of America have *already* begun the regimentation of public opinion: they have *already* created a state of mind. They have galvanized a vast emotionalism. They have indeed prepared the American people for entry into the Second World War on the side of Mannerheim Finland, on the side of Britain and France. The press and radio of the United States are defying the overwhelming desire of the American people to remain at peace. Destroying our neutrality, these warmongers have got us pretty far along on the road to war. The American press is betraying the American people. GEORGE SELDES.

Lawless California

SCANT attention from the metropolitan press met last week's sensational revelations of the La Follette Civil Liberties Committee, now engaged in digging into the seamy side of California's industrial and agricultural labor relations. Gen. Pelham Glassford testified that a reign of lawlessness prevailed in Imperial Valley in 1934 when he was sent to investigate conditions there. He described a mythical Red scare raised by growers' associations to break union organization. He told of murders, concentration camps, and the abrogation of all civil rights in a conspiracy which involved business men, thugs, sharpshooters, provocateurs, as well as local and state officials.

Another choice bit of testimony came from Paul Eliel, former official of the subsidized Industrial Association of San Francisco. Mr. Eliel stated that $1,769,634 was collected to support an open shop "American plan" which was no more than an undercover labor espionage, with complete strikebreaking service.

Here is an obvious threat to American liberties; it made few headlines, was never investigated by Martin Dies. Despite its small appropriation, the La Follette committee is doing an excellent job; but the spotlight of publicity has been turned in another direction.

Camp Lost Colony

America's dispossessed farming people make their own home and carry on their fight against the landowners.

AT the time, last January, that *The Grapes of Wrath* was exploding upon the American consciousness, hundreds of black and white sharecropping and tenant-farming families were holding a demonstration on a cold, windswept Missouri highway. Led by a Negro preacher, these families were protesting their eviction from the farms of southeastern Missouri. News reports revealed conditions of horror and suffering among them similar to those portrayed in Steinbeck's novel.

Unlike the Joads, these demonstrators were not migratory workers; they were citizens of the state of Missouri. Like Owen Whitfield, their leader, they had been working the land of Missouri for thirty-five years, and more. Of the seventeen hundred demonstrators, twelve hundred were Negroes. Unable to secure new contracts with the landowners after the cotton crop had been picked, they had been evicted from the flimsy croppers' cabins and turned onto the highways. The landowners' reply to nationwide interest in these people's plight was that such conditions were not a "problem"; it was all part of the cotton system. After the crop is picked, the tools and livestock are put aside until the spring planting. The tenants and sharecroppers whom the landowners did not wish to retain were simply turned onto the highways, to be taken care of by the Missouri Patrol.

The people had no place to go. This was the only country they knew, and they intended to stay. Most of all, they were angry. They followed Owen Whitfield into their United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing, and Allied Workers union and found shelter in the small nearby towns after the demonstration was over. Some took refuge in a local Negro church, others in a dance hall. Twenty-three black and white families made camp in a swamp. A few of these were fortunate enough to receive eight tents from the Farm Security Administration. The others slept in a ramshackle house. Earlier, the FSA had provided a few families with emergency cash grants, but this was stopped when the planters accused the government of financing the demonstration.

Funds were now coming in to the group from sympathizers and such organizations as the New York Committee to Aid Agricultural Workers. Some of the money was used to purchase a small tract of partly wooded land in Butler County. Here the croppers established Camp Lost Colony, a collection of sixty-six log cabins built from timber growing on the site. Since June 12, 1939, these black and white families have lived in Camp Lost Colony in harmony, refusing to give way under the repeated threats of the planters to "blow them off the land." Intimidation has taken many forms—such as refusing the croppers water from a river flowing within six feet of the camp. Young girls of the camp have been warned by boys in the nearby town to stay within the camp lest they "be taken care of." But the camp is still growing. More cabins are being erected; the morale of the group is high. Fully conscious of their plight, they know what measures are necessary to correct it. As Whitfield points out, they realize that their condition signifies more than a problem of temporary relief, that it has profound social and political implications; the disposition of their case will test the sincerity of the New Deal administration. It is a question of whether the administration will allow those measures passed for the alleviation of suffering to continue to be used as instruments for depressing wages and reenforcing conditions they were meant to relieve.

Agencies such as the AAA, the FSA, and the WPA have been used in the cotton states to force sharecroppers and tenant farmers into accepting the cheap wages and inhuman living conditions offered them by the landowners.

The technique is simple. The county administrations and advisory committees of the Farm Security Administration are made up of ginners, merchants, and large landowners with no representation of the agricultural workers. Responsible for the disposition of government funds, these gentlemen have used the agencies to their own advantage. With government benefits in the hands of the planters, workers who fail to agree with the landowners find themselves denied such benefits. Under present laws all benefit checks are sent to the county agent's office and are made payable jointly to landowner and sharecropper. Legally these checks require the signatures of both owner and worker. But the sharecropper rarely receives his share of the checks. The landowner simply writes both signatures.

Workers seeking to register complaints of these conditions found that they had nowhere to turn. Letters to Washington had to pass through the local county agent. The complainant was left open to whatever retaliatory measures the planters might choose to take. The whole governmental and legal apparatus, including judges, consists of planters and landowners. Last year, when these conditions were rampant, Gov. Lloyd C. Stark could not be contracted on the matter.

This past December the planters sent out their eviction notices as usual, this time to two thousand families. Again the croppers decided to hold a demonstration. But Governor Stark called a joint meeting of landlords, government representatives, and sharecroppers to discuss a program for rehabilitating the evicted families. The appointment of Owen W. Whitfield to this committee marked the first time that the sharecroppers and ten-

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The *Nation,* and Miss Kirchwey especially, devoted themselves to the cause of the Spanish loyalists and so they have the right—unlike President Roosevelt, Mr. Hoover, and all the reactionary hypocrites who did nothing about Spain—to give their opinion about Finland. But in this case Miss Kirchwey's tragic phrases are, like the President's "moral embargo," founded on false news from Helsinki. Roosevelt knew the news was false; Miss Kirchwey may not have known. The point I wish to make is that the *Nation,* having come out editorially against the USSR at the first false news of "the bombardment of civilians," was not willing to publish editorials later showing up that news as false. This means that two liberal publications, which so often counteract the commercial poison of the commercial press, have done nothing at all about one of the greatest campaigns of misrepresentation in all history.

[In its issue of January 20, the *Nation* belatedly discovered that the "American press has been guilty of more than a little exaggeration in its presentation of the Finnish news." The *Nation* now admits "that there is no clear evidence of deliberate bombing of civilians." Apparently, the *New Republic* is not quite so certain. In its issue of the same week, somewhat after Mr. Seldes' articles began to appear in NEW MASSES, the *New Republic* asserts that "air bombing of civilians has not been nearly so serious as it was in Spain and China."—THE EDITORS.]

The only publications in the United States which have unceasingly and brilliantly kept the record straight on Finland are the *Daily Worker,* central organ of the Communist Party of the United States, and NEW MASSES, to which I am happy to have contributed this survey.

REQUIRED READING

Faced with the problem of a press which suppresses and distorts—when it does not lie, as is the case with news about the Soviet—the critic of American journalism has frequently been asked for constructive suggestions. One of mine has always been to read several papers and get several points of view. Another has been to read the left, liberal, progressive magazines, and I still stick to this one. But it is becoming more and more difficult to get at the facts by reading many commercial newspapers. The New York *Herald Tribune*—conservative, tory, Republican—prints about the same kind of news as the New York *Times,* which claims it is liberal and Democratic. Certainly as regards the USSR the lies and distortions have been about as bad in the *Times* and the *Tribune* and the Hearst papers, so reading them all does not help. Nor is the present question one of viewpoints. It is a question of facts. You get the Republican viewpoint in the *Herald Tribune* and a Democratic viewpoint in the New York *Post* (not the *Times*), but both have published the same sort of rumors and falsifications as news from Finland.

If, therefore, in the past it was a good idea to read the *Herald Tribune* and the *Times* to get contrasting viewpoints, and to read both of them and the *Daily Worker* to get still another viewpoint, it now becomes imperative to read the *Daily Worker* (and NEW MASSES) to get not only the contrasting angle, but the actual information. And you do not have to wait years or decades for the lies and propaganda to be shown up for what they were, as was the case with the hysterical era whose worst year was 1920. You get the corrective right now, every day and every week.

One question remains: how does the present campaign of falsehood about the Soviet Union fit into the movement to involve the United States in war?

In 1931 the U. S. War Policies Commission held hearings on ways and means of mobilizing America in a future war. On the question of press mobilization, the commission took testimony from Herbert Bayard Swope who, until he retired in 1928, had made the New York *World* a great, powerful, liberal newspaper. Said Mr. Swope:

> In time of war the free play of public opinion, with its violent contradictions, its cross currents,

Mental-Telephoto from Helsinki via London

THE PERFECT PROPAGANDA PHOTOGRAPH. *A birdseye view of the Finnish front in a blinding snowstorm. In the foreground are eighteen Finnish skiers in white parkas huddled behind a snowbank ready to surround and annihilate a Russian division (their fourth this week). To their left is a column of Russian tanks that were destroyed by a Finnish school boy. The snow-covered mound to the right hides the bodies of five blind men, six workers' children, and a one-armed rheumatic old woman (sole support of a family of twelve) who were machine-gunned by a Red air fleet. Just beyond the woods the Red troops are retreating wildly from Suomussalmi toward the Soviet border, without shoes, uniforms, or underwear. Some are tearing the bark off the trees to appease their mad hunger. (They haven't eaten since the czarist regime.) The eyewitness reporters in the snow-filled shell hole nearby are Harold Denny, Webb Miller, and Mr. X (the source of reliable reports). The huge Soviet bomber hanging from the pine trees was brought down by a member of the Helsinki Girls Foils Club (a junior member). The camouflaged igloo on skis near the lake is the Finnish Army field headquarters and the group of naked men near the igloo are Red deserters from Georgia, who report the sun never shines in the Soviet Union. The fresh ski tracks in the middle foreground were made by Colonel X and his adjutant who are off to bomb the Murmansk Railroad for the late city edition. In the distance a Finn on ice skates is sneaking past the Soviet sentries to attack a division of sleeping Reds. In his right hand he clutches the knife with which he wiped out another Soviet Division before breakfast. The snow-covered figure on the white horse leading the whiteclad ski troops in the blinding snowstorm in the struggle for democracy is Baron Mannerheim.*

PHIL BARD AND BORIS GORELICK.

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press went the Red-baiting lay press a million better in news and editorials. But now it seems that Count Szeptycki "was alive and in good health approximately three weeks ago," i.e., December 8, according to a Vienna dispatch to the *Times*.

But when it comes to Finns admitting cold-blooded atrocities, not a word of protest appears in the *Times* or the rest of the press. On January 8 the United Press sent out an interview with the commander of a Finnish ski patrol who told how he came upon thirty Russian soldiers sleeping around an open campfire. The Finn is quoted as saying: "One minute the Russians were sleeping, and the next there were only echoes of the screams of the dying as hand grenades blew the camp to bits. I reminded the men of the importance of our work and asked the Almighty to give us power to fulfill it."

AS BAD AS FRANCO

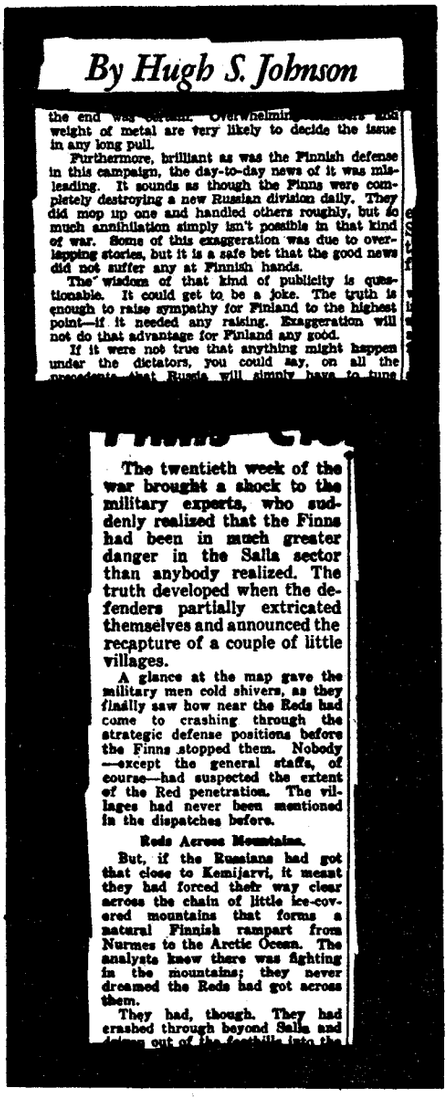
Here is an admission of as horrible a crime as any charged against the Germans in the World War. The Finns admit exactly what has been charged against enemies in all wars: that they murdered their prisoners. This is precisely what the Moors and Falangists under Franco frequently did in Spain. It is something we expect from mercenaries and bloody Spanish fascists, but hardly from "democratic" and "civilized" people. The Finns made no attempt to disarm the Soviet soldiers, to conduct them to a prison camp. They murdered them in cold blood. They did just what the commander of a German U-boat did when he became panic-stricken on realizing he had sunk a hospital ship instead of a troopship. And like Franco, who went to Mass between massacres, the Finnish hero of this massacre calls upon the Almighty to give him power to fulfill his work.

No hysteria, no wave of indignation, no editorials in the American press about this atrocity. That would not be consistent. Having betrayed their readers by spreading the myth of the civilian bombings, they could not now strike an impartial attitude by playing up or commenting upon a really barbaric act which the Finns not only admitted but boasted about.

A press that suppresses all news unfavorable to its advertisers—such as the daily orders against advertisers from the Federal Trade Commission—and violates the canons of journalism by perverting its headlines and publishing prejudiced news (including falsehoods) concerning a conflict such as this, cannot be called a free press. No intelligent person in the United States of America believes that we have a free press—free in the sense of being honest, fair, ethical. So it is useless to hope that the news from Europe will be reported honestly, fairly, ethically.

However, there has always been a small free press in America which, quite naturally, has been the non-commercial press. It consists of the liberal, left, labor, radical, church, and special-group press, which sometimes serves causes to which it is dedicated but never the love of money which is the root of all evil in the commercial press. I have never questioned the integrity of a newspaper which openly announces its purpose, as for example the restoration of the monarchy by *Action Francaise* or the spread of socialism by *Humanite*, both of Paris.

In the United States there have been very few newspapers openly dedicated to causes, but there have been many liberal magazines, and ever since the World War a minority has looked to these magazines for the truth which the daily press has suppressed or perverted. The purpose of the magazine *Ken* was to publish such news, in a popular way, for millions of readers, but the advertisers forced a change in its policy before the first issue appeared. It was probably the dirtiest sellout in journalism of our time. It showed up the advertising fraternity of this country as dedicated to reaction and its ultimate form, fascism. But for three months I believed that the most necessary magazine in America, a liberal, popular million-circulation magazine (which still doesn't exist), would compete with the popular magazine press which cannot (if it wanted to) give its readers the facts of life. Facts—about everything from face-powder to Finland—interfere with the profits of the big business system under which we live. I have therefore been forced to go back to the literary, non-commercial, intellectual weeklies which generally do print the facts for their (unfortunately) limited circulation.



By Hugh S. Johnson

...the end was certain. Over-whelming ... and weight of metal are very likely to decide the issue in any long pull.

Furthermore, brilliant as was the Finnish defense in this campaign, the day-to-day news of it was misleading. It sounds as though the Finns were completely destroying a new Russian division daily. They did mop up one and handled others roughly, but so much annihilation simply isn't possible in that kind of war. Some of this exaggeration was due to overlapping stories, but it is a safe bet that the good news did not suffer any at Finnish hands.

The wisdom of that kind of publicity is questionable. It could get to be a joke. The truth is enough to raise sympathy for Finland to the highest point—if it needed any raising. Exaggeration will not do that advantage for Finland any good.

If it were not true that anything might happen under the dictators, you could say, on all the precedents, that Russia will simply have to turn ...

The twentieth week of the war brought a shock to the military experts, who suddenly realized that the Finns had been in much greater danger in the Salla sector than anybody realized. The truth developed when the defenders partially extricated themselves and announced the recapture of a couple of little villages.

A glance at the map gave the military men cold shivers, as they finally saw how near the Reds had come to crashing through the strategic defense positions before the Finns stopped them. Nobody—except the general staffs, of course—had suspected the extent of the Red penetration. The villages had never been mentioned in the dispatches before.

Reds Across Mountains.

But, if the Russians had got that close to Kemijarvi, it meant they had forced their way clear across the chain of little ice-covered mountains that forms a natural Finnish rampart from Nurmes to the Arctic Ocean. The analysts knew there was fighting in the mountains; they never dreamed the Reds had got across them.

They had, though. They had crashed through beyond Salla and ... out of the foothills into the

IT COULD GET TO BE A JOKE. *General Johnson warns his fellow-craftsmen to be careful how they handle the Finnish "news." The canny imperialist realizes the paid press has been overreaching itself in its Finnish campaigning. The truth is seeping through and millions of Americans begin to see beyond the newspapers. Below the Johnson excerpt are a few paragraphs from the New York "Post's" military writer, Fletcher Pratt. He admits, perforce, that the Soviet armies have not been heeding the military communiques out of Helsinki and that lots of things have been happening nobody found in the news.*

At this moment thousands of persons intelligent enough to distrust the commercial press are undoubtedly looking to the non-commercial press for enlightenment. The literary weeklies, as the record from 1917 to date has shown, have been almost the only source of factual material regarding the Soviet Union. In 1920 Walter Lippmann and Charles Merz published in the *New Republic* their study of the Red hysteria of their time and the total corruption of the press as regards Soviet news over a period of three years. They chose the New York *Times* to investigate because the *Times* lied less and distorted less than the general run of newspapers; yet their findings remain the most sensational indictment of the press (and the *Times* in particular) in modern history. (Today Lippmann is writing stuff for the Sands Point polo club in the New York *Herald Tribune;* Charles Merz is editor of the *Times,* and both are in the upper brackets in terms of income tax returns; on the other side, so far as liberal journalism is concerned.)

THE "NATION" AND "NEW REPUBLIC"

Today, the *New Republic* has not so far entered the lists against the corrupt press and on the side of truthful news, as it did in 1917-20, in regard to the Soviet Union. In its December 20 issue, it is true, the *New Republic* realized that "there seems to be gathering a black cloud in the form of a war by the rest of the world against the Soviet Union." That cloud has never left the horizon since 1917; it was especially ominous at the time of the Munich betrayal, and was visible despite the smokescreens of the war between Germany and the British and French.

In the *Nation* for December 9, Freda Kirchwey wrote about "the bodies of civilians smashed to fragments in buses or on the streets of undefended towns by bombs dropped from Soviet war planes. The horrors that fascism wreaked in Spain are being repeated, in the name of peace and socialism, in Finland."

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Warlords of the Press

George Seldes, experienced foreign correspondent, exposes the faking of atrocity stories that are used to involve the United States in war. The record of Spain. God and the Finns.

IN 1914 the American people were led to hate the Germans because of the "atrocities" in Belgium. Five years later, when the American people learned they had not gone into the war to make the world safe for democracy, the wave of disillusion swept away the atrocity fakes. For many years, in fact, millions of Americans believed that no atrocities at all took place. The truth is simply this: there were atrocities, not many but some, but the atrocities charged to the Germans in Belgium were mostly invented. On the other hand, the massacre of the doctors, nurses, and seamen who survived the sinking of the *Llandovery Castle* was a proved atrocity. I covered the hearings in the Supreme Court in Leipzig several years after the war and heard German sailors admit their officers had ordered the murder of all the survivors and that they had machine-gunned the lifeboats. They missed one; that is how the atrocity became known.

The American press became so wary of atrocity stories that it refused to publish them. In the Spanish war, the loyalist government never denied that in July and August 1936, after Franco had rebelled and taken the army and most of the police force with him, there followed a chaotic period in which fanatics got out of hand. However, no atrocity was ever committed by the loyalist government or army, and none in any district, after the day that law and order were reestablished. On the other side atrocities *were* committed by order of Franco (that Christian crusader) and Gen. Queipo de Llano (another Christian crusader). The latter boasted about them in his daily radio talks, in his statements published by the Seville newspaper *A.B.C.*, and in the fascist press of Portugal. However, the American press, subjected to a double pressure—from the Catholic hierarchy which wanted only pro-Franco news published, and from various groups of humanitarians who wanted the Spanish democracy to get a square deal in the newspapers—refrained generally from publishing atrocity stories of any kind. (The exception, of course, was the Hearst press, which bought loyalist pictures and stories of fascist atrocities and changed them for use against the loyalists.)

HONEST JOURNALISM

In the German-Polish campaign, atrocity stories came in from both sides, but not one was believed. The Associated Press sent its Mr. Lochner, and the United Press sent its representatives into Poland to investigate reports of burning of churches, destruction of shrines of the Virgin, killing of civilians, use of poison gas, etc. Even when photographs of dead civilians were obtained the captions said there was no proof as to how innocent men, women, and children met their deaths.

That was honest journalism.

But the day the Soviet-Finnish conflict broke out, all the rules of honest journalism were set aside, just as they were on the radio. Everything became permissible, just as it was on the radio. In the deluge of lies and distortions and propaganda numerous atrocities were charged against the Soviet troops. One of these lies originated in the Stockholm paper *Social-Demokraten,* which published an interview with a Finnish officer saying "the most horrible thing in this war is that the Finns are compelled to shoot down Polish civilian prisoners whom the Russians force by machine-gun fire to advance in the first ranks across our minefields."

This is the story as it came over the wires. Now, a little while ago there was a story about Moorish soldiers (wearing the Sacred Heart of Jesus on their uniforms) entering the hospital of Toledo, Spain, and cutting the throats of several hundred wounded loyalist soldiers, not sparing the doctors or nurses. That story was told by survivors, eyewitnesses. There was the massacre of thousands of workingmen in the bullring of Badajoz which Portuguese eyewitness journalists reported with approval because the victims were "Reds," but which Father Thorning, associated with the Christian Front, denied. There was the Italo-German bombardment of Guernica which Noel Monks, a Roman Catholic journalist, saw and reported—and which Father Thorning also denied. All these atrocity stories came into the offices of the New York papers and were discounted or suppressed, or printed and then later denied.

Moreover, after the first days of the war the copyreaders of the New York *Times, Post, World-Telegram,* and other papers either threw out all atrocity stories or demanded proof; when no proof arrived, the stories were placed where they belonged, in the wastebasket.

NO MORE RESTRICTIONS

Now all that is changed. There is no longer any code of ethics restricting radio announcers to the impartial facts, any code of journalistic ethics regarding rumored atrocities. But sometimes even an atrocity story is proved a fake.

There was, for example, the lie spread by the Secretariat of State of His Holiness Pope Pius XII from Vatican City to the effect that Monsignor Andreas Szeptycki, archbishop of the Ruthenian Rite at Lwow, had been foully murdered by those "godless" Russians some time in October. The Red-baiting Catholic

EDITOR & PUBLISHER

WHO IS LYING?

THE IRREPRESSIBLE George Seldes is again blasing against newspapers. This time he accuses them of "lying" on a scale never before noted by him in 81 years of newspaper work. which, considering his past charges of newspaper mendacity, ought to make the present performance one to be remembered.

His first article appeared last week in *New Masses.* It was concerned mainly with headlines of the first week of Russia's attack on Finland. The war opened with a rain of bombs on Helsinki, Viipuri, and other Finnish cities. That is undisputed. What Seldes objects to is that the newspapers played this story as an attack by the Red military aviation against Finnish civilians, which he denies. The Red objectives were, he declares, airports and railroad depots.

That the newspapers "lied" in their first stories, he seeks to prove by stories printed later in the week which listed the number of civilian Finns killed and wounded by the bombers. These numbers, he said, are ridiculously small beside the thousands killed and maimed in Barcelona by the Italian attacks during the Spanish war—proof, to Seldes, that the Russians were not attacking civilians and that the poor wights who stopped a bomb fragment were just unlucky. He also charges that the photographs published here of bomb damage in Helsinki were faked by the British.

His major point seems to be that the American press is engaged in a campaign in favor of the "reactionary" government of Finland, and against the "people's government" recognized by Moscow at the outset of the war. We have seen no such campaign.

Except in the Communist press, the "people's government" has been described here for what common sense says it is—a puppet of the same pattern that the Japanese and Germans have used in their aggressions.

To non-Communist eyes, there is no enthusiasm for the "people's government" among the six Finnish divisions, half of them not regulars, which have repelled every Russian advance for six weeks. American eye-witness reporters have told that story, and the greater part of what we have read in AP, UP, INS, and other correspondence reads like the work of honest and competent men and women.

Seldes hesitates to impugn that honesty. By implication, he seeks to put the blame on New York rewrite desks. He goes back to his early world war experience, when, he says, the United Press war desk made a three-quarter column out of his five-word dispatch: Something like that might be happening today, he thinks.

It isn't. As we have frequently pointed out in recent months, press service and special correspondence to newspapers is printed substantially as it comes over cable, radio, or telephone. Often it is cut, seldom expanded. So we can eliminate imaginative war desks as sources of "lies."

With the correspondents and rewrite desks in the clear, it would seem that the anti-Soviet "conspiracy" centers in the men who write heads and make up front pages in America. They are the ones who kill the women and children. They are the plotters who sing hosannas for the "reactionaries" at Helsinki and damn the "friends of the people" hiding in Leningrad!

That does not jell. There have been mistakes; there may have been lies about this "war," but the liars have not been the working press.

YOU'RE LYING, "EDITOR AND PUBLISHER." *The house organ for the millionaire publishers of America's commercial press got hot under the collar after reading the articles by George Seldes appearing currently in this magazine. They devote a long editorial to an attempt to refute the truth.*

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The State of the Union

THIS DEPARTMENT, which NEW MASSES presents weekly, is the joint work of a group of correspondents who send us a letter each week telling about the state of their part of the nation. As more correspondents write in, our coverage will increase. We invite our readers to send their contributions of significant happenings, anecdotes, etc., to "The State of the Union," NEW MASSES.

Cleveland Finnish Relief Crisis

While Cleveland's newspapers continued to wipe out tens of thousands of Red Army men with every sweep of headline type, the real humanitarians stepped forth to join the "Finnish Relief Fund, Inc. for Northeastern Ohio."

The committee is 100 percent blueblood. Chairman is L. B. Williams, president of the National City Bank (Rockefeller). Donations will be received, announces the Cleveland *Plain Dealer*, at the American Savings Bank, Bank of Cleveland, Central National Bank, Cleveland Trust Co., Lorain Street Bank, Morris Plan Bank, Society for Savings, Union Bank of Commerce, National City Bank, and North American Bank and their branches.

The new enthusiasts for relief—not one of whom ever said a word about the starvation of tens of thousands of Clevelanders and most of whom have joined their leader, Hoover, in blistering all relief and WPA proposals—include such humanitarians as the following:

Charles K. Arter, attorney for the notorious Associated Industries (strikebreaking outfit).

Alva Bradley, millionaire owner of most of Cleveland's downtown real estate, owner of the Cleveland Indians and various other enterprises.

E. G. Crawford, president of the giant Cleveland Electric Illuminating Co.

Dudley Hard, National Guard officer, leader of the Chamber of Commerce drive against "subversive elements," and reportedly a close associate of William Dudley Pelley of the Silver Shirts.

Tom Girdler, the Republic Steel humanitarian.

Mrs. David Ingalls of the Ingalls-Taft-Harkness fortune.

The list also includes leaders of the Hunting Valley polo set, virtually every leading banker, Archbishop Joseph Schrembs, two rabbis, an assortment of corporation lawyers, coupon clippers, etc.

Known attempts to get labor leaders into the society apparently failed. None was listed.

Fisherman Conservation

The government's proposed 50 percent restriction of Alaska salmon fishing this season as a conservation measure threatens to deprive fifteen thousand Pacific Coast men (five thousand in San Francisco) of their only means of livelihood this year. Naturally, the fish and the men are entitled to at least equal consideration. So far not the slightest concern has been shown for the men. Conservation is okay with the boys, but they point out that huge, specially designed Japanese vessels using mile-long nets, operating in and around Alaskan waters, are looting the seas of salmon and negating all government regulations. In view of this, the restricted season will merely enrich the Japanese nets without effecting any conservation. The fishing and cannery unions (CIO) are asking careful consideration of the decision by Secretary of Interior Ickes. If the restriction goes through, they propose special WPA projects for the men. In restricting crops for farmers, the government took care to provide compensation to farmers, but gave not a thought to farm laborers who suffered miserably. Many growers evicted sharecroppers to avoid sharing compensation checks with them. An important precedent must be established. All acts which displace labor or bar men from jobs, even temporarily, must carry with them the responsibility for the welfare of those affected.

Minnesota's Baby Boy

Gov. "Baby Boy" Stassen of Minnesota won the national beauty prize of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce as "the nation's outstanding young man of 1939." He wins the custard pie for his farcical trials of Farmer-Laborites and manipulation of the civil service to kick out liberals and build a big Republican machine. Baby Boy Stassen and the Republican legislature are still holding up the housing-enabling bill as another tenement fire sweeps Minneapolis.

The Twin City Conference on Civil Rights, held this weekend and sponsored by the Teachers Union, Farmer Labor Association, and Social Work Today Committee, discussed: maintaining civil liberties by keeping out of war; WPA trials; the Dies committee; anti-trust laws against labor; academic freedom; rights of nationalities and minorities; restrictive Minnesota labor legislation.

What Detroit Writes About

The Public Letter Box of the Detroit *News* can furnish some interesting, and often informative, reading—when there is no strike or lockout on, requiring careful "editing" in the interest of large employers.

Two separate controversies are currently rocking the letter columns. One concerns the tear-jerking fifteen-minute dramas that monopolize radio time during the daylight hours. Opinion on these is about evenly divided, with half the contributors violently in favor of banning the heart-throbs or restricting them; the other half vigorously maintain that constant preoccupation with the fictitious cares of others helps them to forget their own.

The other controversy revolves around the issue of Finnish relief. On this question nearly unanimous opinion holds that "Charity should begin at home," and "Help America First."

Putzi Hoover arrived in Detroit last Sunday to speak at a Finnish benefit given by the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. With his customary tactlessness, he chose this occasion to announce: "It is an economic fact that we in this country have a surplus of nearly everything." To which we say: Tell that to the Detroit welfare "cases," who know that all welfare funds will be exhausted early in February and nobody has yet hinted where more will come from. Tell it to the single unemployed men who stumble along Michigan avenue, so dazed from hunger they walk blindly into the sides of moving cars. Tell it to the Detroit housewives who picketed the Finnish Fund concert, suggesting that the bejeweled and starched patrons shed just a few tears for their own neighbors. Or, for that matter, tell it to the Detroit Symphony Orchestra which has chosen this moment to inform its public that unless substantial financial help is forthcoming, the orchestra must cease to exist.

Or Mr. Hoover might divulge this heartening information to the Detroit school teachers who were practically sandbagged into making substantial donations to the Community Fund, the Goodfellows' Christmas Fund, the Open Heart Fund, the this-that-and-the-other fund—not to mention regular deductions from their wages for the Children's Milk Fund—and then "invited" to "help Finland." About four thousand teachers "responded." Their average contribution—about two bits—figures out to the lowest sum one could decently offer without being placed in greater danger of reprisal than would follow no contribution whatever.

Wooden Nutmegs

Relief funds have been exhausted in Stamford, Conn. Some days ago the Stamford board of selectmen and board of finance met jointly and squabbled over whether to appropriate additional welfare funds. A crisis threatened, with hundreds of people dependent on the city.

After three hours of debate, the conference broke up without any settlement but officials let it be known that relief payments would continue on a day to day basis to comply with Connecticut law that no one be permitted to go hungry.

Four days later in Bridgeport Superior Court, an inquiry was ordered launched by Judge Carl Foster into the affairs of the town and city of Stamford.

The court said, "There is some reason to believe that some one or more of the citizens of the town and city of Stamford have caused public moneys of the town and city to be misspent for their own individual enrichment and to the enrichment of individuals, firms, and corporations not residents of such town and city."

This grand jury investigation, another in a series of Connecticut probes in recent years, followed the calling of a grand jury in Bridgeport court to consider a Norwalk homicide case. Investigation into this case was shelved to permit the Stamford investigation.

Whether there is a direct link between the recent relief crisis and the investigation, cannot now be ascertained. It is clear, however, that whatever the basis of the legal accusation, the officials of the city and town government have placed the welfare of the city's needy far down in the list of important municipal affairs.

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Lewis and Roosevelt

The CIO president serves notice of labor's political independence. Roosevelt's broken promises. A third party instead of a third term?

Washington.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT ought not be surprised if his own predictions are coming true. His election guesses, usually deposited in sealed envelopes which are opened after the event, have turned out to be pretty acute. The President has also indulged in crystal-gazing concerning no less a matter than the future of the Democratic Party; these prophecies he has made public.

In the fighting Jackson Day Speech of thirteen months ago, the President stated that the Democratic Party would remain in power only so long as it held the allegiance of the country's great liberal vote. If his party strayed from the liberal path, Roosevelt prophesied, it would meet the same unhappy fate as the Democratic Party in the days of Martin Van Buren. The President's reasoning was clearcut. Neither party speaks for a majority of the electorate. The decisive factor when real issues are at stake is the independent vote of the country, which is overwhelmingly liberal and progressive.

Now the inevitable is happening. Franklin D. Roosevelt has scuttled the brave promises which produced the loose, but nonetheless real, coalition between the New Deal and labor and progressive forces that made possible his amazing victory in 1936. So the coalition is breaking up. Labor is looking for new alignments. This is the real significance of John L. Lewis' blast at the Golden Jubilee Convention of the United Mine Workers of America.

PAST HISTORY

The rift between the CIO and the White House has of course been in the making for a long time. Lewis never forgave the President his rigid "impartiality" in condemning the striking workers and Tom Girdler's thugs during the "little steel" strike in 1937. Subsequently Lewis became impatient with Roosevelt's recurrent flirtations with business, his vacillations, his lack of contact with organized labor.

Following the outbreak of war in September, the breach widened rapidly. Lewis began to distrust the President's foreign policies. He led the CIO in working out one of the strongest and most unequivocal peace positions adopted by any major progressive organization. The CIO legislative program criticized the administration for neglecting the domestic problems of the people; it outlined a real social security program. When the President's budget came out, *CIO News* unleashed a bitter editorial attack.

Another key issue separated Lewis and the President: the former felt that labor, and specifically the CIO, should hold a key position in the coalition around the New Deal. As Lewis pointed out in his speech to the UMW at Columbus, he wanted labor to get important administration appointments, to be consulted on matters of policy. The President, on the other hand, always paid more attention to the political machines which invariably betrayed him in the tight spots than to the labor unions that gave him real support.

POLITICALLY INDEPENDENT

What Lewis has been driving at for some time is that labor should play an independent, important political role. Labor's Non-Partisan League was organized. CIO unions were encouraged to run their own candidates—and did so with very good results in Ohio and western Pennsylvania. In recent months, Lewis has been increasingly emphasizing the independence of labor. He refused to participate in the conference of West Coast liberals; at a closed meeting of Labor's Non-Partisan League officials a few weeks ago, he vigorously opposed a third term for the President and attacked the inadequacy of administration policies. John L.'s Columbus statement may have been startling because of its bluntness; but it was a development of a basic policy rather than a completely new departure. The Democratic Party was informed that it did not have labor in its pocket. Labor might conceivably support a Democratic candidate, but there would have to be some definite promises and guarantees.

The bouquets which the miners' convention threw at Senator Wheeler of Montana should be viewed against this background. Wheeler's candidacy was advanced, of course. But the demonstration for the senator also strengthened the CIO's bargaining position. The miners made it plain that they had other alternatives than the President or his hand-picked successor. At the same time, Lewis repeatedly stated that the CIO had no commitments to Wheeler or any other candidate.

At this stage of the game it is impossible to predict the precise plans of the CIO or of other progressive organizations for 1940. But trends are becoming clear. The most important has already been indicated—the disintegration of the coalition that formed around the President for the 1936 elections. Twenty-four hours before Lewis made his statement in Columbus, the executive board of the Workers Alliance announced that it would have to reconsider the resolution it adopted at its last convention backing a third term for Roosevelt. A series of sharp attacks on the relief policies of the administration had preceded this announcement. The Farmers Union has been critical in the past of the farm administration's agricultural policies. While its officers have made no general statement of political policy in recent weeks, the Farmers Union has been distinctly friendly to Wheeler. Thus it is in an excellent position to continue its general cooperation with the CIO. As the fight develops against the budget cuts for farm aid, the agricultural revolt against the administration will undoubtedly develop.

Without the support of such organizations as these, the President or his personally chosen candidate is not likely to win in 1940. The actual voting strength of the CIO, the Workers Alliance, and the Farmers Union is not the whole point. To the list of these organizations should also be added the Communist Party, which supported the objectives of the New Deal loyally and efficiently and is now reaping its reward in indictments and prosecutions by the Department of Justice; it was the first to call the turn on the administration's new line. These groups provided much of the enthusiasm and did much of the work which gave the President practically the entire progressive vote in 1936; they were the backbone of the progressive coalition around the New Deal.

Sidney Hillman, William Green, and a handful of other labor leaders are sticking by the President through wars and budget cuts; but they will not meet with substantial success in stemming the anti-Roosevelt tide among the organized workers of the country. The fact is that the groups which have turned against Roosevelt express the growing but still largely inarticulate conflict between the masses of the people and the administration. There isn't much doubt that the ordinary people of America want peace and social security. The administration is moving in a direction that promises precious little of either. Outspoken opposition to the administration by the CIO and the Workers Alliance will help crystallize this genuine underswell of popular feeling.

It would be foolhardy to predict definitely the formation of a third party in the 1940 elections with a presidential ticket of its own; but it isn't so foolhardy to predict that a lot of congressmen and state and local officials will be put forward by the progressive forces. In the swing away from Roosevelt there is the beginning of a new political alignment. John L. Lewis has roundly denounced the Democratic Party for breaking its promises to organized labor, but he has given absolutely no indication of turning to the Republican Party. In the long run, Lewis and the CIO and the Workers Alliance, the Farmers Union, and the progressive people of America will have but one alternative—to form a party which will offer something more hopeful than a reenactment of the Wilsonian tragedy of 1917.

ADAM LAPIN.

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he looked at the wolfdog (who was so remarkably like a wolf).

One cannot deny it, the dogs were by no means so sleek as they used to be. Weighed down by carrying such loads of fleas they grew daily more morose and ill-favored. Their appetites became depraved, they ate dirt and carrion, and said it was a special diet. Others declared themselves vegetarians. They grew mangy, they grew scabby. In their sleep they growled and trembled, and started up from frightful dreams to bark at the tops of their voices and scrabble the ground, saying that they could not sleep on an ant's nest. Really it was the fleas biting them, but they itched far too much to be able to discriminate.

The fleas, too, were not without their anxieties. They sucked as hard as ever, or harder; they leaped from dog to dog; but the old, juicy days seemed lost. Groups of public-spirited fleas made it their duty to sit in the dog's ears, saying alternately that everything was going on splendidly or that the situation was desperate, that all that was needed was patience or that something must be done at once. But above all, they said, the dogs must trust their fleas. Dogdom and fleadom were inseparable, since without fleas there could be no circulation of the blood.

As even the large dogs were growing so thin and innutritious, their fleas gave them practical advice also. One of the measures they recommended was the assimilation of the lesser dogs. So many small dogs, said they, going about so lean and unhealthy, created a breeding-ground for bear's hydrophobia and was essentially uneconomic. Various small dogs were assimilated—their fleas, of course, moving on to the assimilators. But they were so thin that there was really very little nourishment in them, and the fleas found it less and less rewarding to carry on their mission of circulating the blood. How much better it would be, thought they, to assimilate the bear.

They hurried to the dogs' ears and began to praise the fatness, the warm reviving taste of bear's meat. They talked incessantly; the dogs went about shaking their heads but nothing could stop the singing in their ears.

"Bear, bear!" sang the fleas. "Beautiful tender bear! Enormous, inexhaustible bear! Rich well-flavored bear! All those unexploited ribs of bear, those vast natural resources. And the melting little tippity ears. Bear for strength! Bear for vigor! Bear for quiet, natural sleep! Bear is best!"

The dogs went round in circles with their tails quivering and their mouths watering.

"Bear!" sang a fresh chorus of fleas. "Nature's own remedy. Bear, the sure speedy cure for all ills. Strengthens weak dogs. Positively ends that tired feeling. Bear, rich in vitaminous properties. Radium-impregnated bear! Dispels neurasthenia, clears the complexion, allays flatulence, arches flat feet, makes teeth like new, restores vital confidence, removes blackheads. Stops that gnawing craving in the pit of the stomach. Revealed by grateful Indian widow to colonel's wife. Sends the rich red blood coursing through the veins."

The dogs went round faster and faster, twitching their ears and saying they heard spirit voices.

"Surely you aren't afraid of the bear?" sang the fleas. "Suppose he did maul you a little? That was long ago. Think how much stronger you are now. Besides, his claws are made of three-ply and he has no underclothes."

The dogs moaned and quivered. They jostled against each other in their anxiety to send each other forward against the bear and yet not be too far behind to miss the assimilation.

"Bear!" shrieked the fleas. "Eat bear, eat bear, eat bear! Bear! *If you don't eat him he'll eat you!*"

The bear came to the edge of the forest, looked out, and growled. He was larger than they expected.

SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER.

Soriano

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The Bear

Sylvia Townsend Warner, author of "Lolly Willowes" and "Mr. Fortune's Maggot," offers a fable for the present time. To be read aloud.

ONCE upon a time there was a bear. One morning he woke up and stretched himself.

"I declare," said he, "I'm eaten alive with fleas!"

He began to scratch. The more he scratched the more he found. On his back, his ribs, his belly. On his nose and his chops and up and down his legs. Behind his ears and between his toes. Fleas of all sizes, all kinds, all colors, from the great big fleas that lived like landowners on his juiciest parts to the little pindling fleas that scurried about among the big ones, snatching a suck here and a suck there. Having begun, he made a job of it. He scratched till he ached. He scratched till half his fur was off. His paws grew sore but he had no time to suck them. He went without his breakfast and his dinner and his supper, he was so busy scratching.

At last he got up and shook himself. There wasn't a flea left.

"My!" said the bear. "It was a job, but it was worth it. I'll never have fleas again."

All this time there was a terrific dog fight going on near by. So many dogs had joined in that it would have puzzled an adding machine to keep count of them. Among them was a poodle and a wolfdog and a bulldog (some said he was a lion; it all depended on how you looked at him; if you thought of him as a bulldog he seemed rather yellow for a bulldog and if you thought of him as a lion he seemed rather bowlegged for a lion), and a yalla dog and a greyhound who could run very swiftly. They went round and round, over and over, snapping and growling and tearing and barking and yowling. But when they heard the bear say, "I'll never have fleas again," they stopped fighting and with one accord cried out: "Disgraceful!"

They were all covered with fleas themselves.

Then the bulldog (who might have been a lion) said: "Fellow combatants! Fellow flea-bearers! We cannot stand for this. Let us unite to rescue that clumsy, wicked, illiterate, and highly dangerous bear from his abominable notion of living without fleas."

They looked at the bear, who was now hunting for berries at the edge of the forest. He was thin, because while scratching out the fleas he had had no time for meals. He was tired, too, because he had been scratching his hardest for days on end. He limped because his paws were sore, and he looked very shabby because he had scratched so much fur off. He also looked inattentive, because he was busy hunting for berries.

"Pooh!" said the dogs. "What a vile down-at-heels animal! We'll soon put an end to his nonsense."

Some went this way, some went that way, but they all set on the bear. They snarled and snapped at him. They fastened their teeth in him and worried him. Whichever way the bear turned there was a dog after him, and when he shook off any particular dog it sat down and yowled: "On, dear brothers! The cause of flea-bearing is at stake. One more bite will finish the brute. He's almost done."

And all the fleas who used to live on the bear sat round in a ring, licking their lips and keeping tight hold of their little suitcases. But in spite of the number and ferocity of the dogs, and the number and moral support of the fleas (who now ran several newspapers saying what a frightful animal the bear was and how they longed to return to his shaggy bosom) the bear held his own. In the end not a dog dared have another try at him. The bear went back into the forest and the dogs trooped back to the village. As for the fleas, seeing that they could not get back on the bear they settled down on the dogs, saying philosophically to the dogs' own fleas that misery makes one acquainted with strange bedfellows.

One day a young dog went into the forest for a look round. When he came back he said, "I saw the bear."

"Oh, indeed," said the dogs loftily. "How does he look?"

"Lean," said the explorer.

"Dying of starvation," said the dogs.

The exploring dog looked dubious. He said: "He's taking a lot of exercise, that bear."

"Hunting for food," said the dogs. "He'll soon die. Good riddance! Serves him right!"

Time went on. One day two young dogs went into the forest for a look round. When they came back they said, "We saw the bear."

"Isn't he dead yet?" asked the dogs.

"By no means," said the explorers. "Indeed, he looks quite plump. Plumper than some of us," they added.

"Unwholesome fat," said the dogs. "The lazy brute never takes any exercise. He'll soon die. Serves him right! Good riddance!"

The fleas, hearing that the bear looked plump, sighed and looked wistful. One murmured to another: "Bear's grease, bear's grease! A simple diet, yet how wholesome!" And his friend replied in a languishing voice: "Bear's ham, bear's ham! How tasty and nourishing! These dogs aren't what they were."

It was quite true. The dogs were by no means as fat as they had been, and though the fleas did all they could to stimulate them, biting them harder than ever and in the tenderest places, they would not bestir themselves and put on flesh. As for the wolfdog, he had come out of the great fight badly mauled and unable to forage for himself; and as nobody troubled to feed him in the end he died of hunger, and his place was taken by a new wolfdog (at least, he said he was a wolfdog, though he looked exactly like a wolf). The greyhound had also changed a good deal. He had eaten a piece of carrion, with the result that he had swelled up, lost all his former elegance, and now exactly resembled a pugdog, though he could still run if need be.

Now not only the bear's own fleas but all the fleas were whispering among themselves of bear's grease and bear's hams, and of overlooking the past. Many of them said that the bear had learned by experience and could now appreciate a good flea since without fleas there could be no circulation of the blood. Presently a small band of fleas hopped off the dogs and went unobtrusively into the forest. Some came back looking sour. Others did not come back. Once or twice noises came from the forest, the bear bellowing out: "I'll teach you to come back! So much for you, my little hop-ma-jig!"

The next thing that happened was a shocking outbreak of rabies among some of the smaller dogs. What did they do but declare that they were being pestered to death by their fleas and must get rid of them!

"Bear's hydrophobia!" cried the fleas. The pugdog and the wolfdog, the bulldog and the yalla dog and the poodle trembled at the thought of catching such a terrible disease, and fell on the smaller dogs, half-throttling them in order to make them give up the frantic idea of living without fleas. While they were thus correcting a spaniel the bear came to the edge of the forest, looked out, and growled. They glanced at him over their shoulders. He was larger than they expected.

Afterwards, talking it over among themselves, they agreed that he was very weedy, that his coat was in wretched condition, so that anyone could see he had no fleas, and that he had undoubtedly overgrown his strength. They began to discuss what they could do about him. Said the poodle: "He's painfully uncouth, poor animal! But really he's more of a fool than a knave. I've been trying, you know, to teach him a few tricks."

"Waste of time," said the yalla dog. "He'll never catch up with us. He can't."

"Haw!" said the bulldog. "I suppose he might have his uses. But I hate the sight of him."

The pugdog and the wolfdog put up their heads, slavered at the jaws, and howled: "Bear's hydrophobia, bear's hydrophobia! It's carried everywhere by those filthy ants. Death to the ants!"

This cry was taken up by the fleas, who hated the ants for their servile industry.

"I hate the sight of him," repeated the bulldog (who might have been a lion). Presumably he was still talking of the bear; but

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Soviet difficulties with Japan. Since last September the USSR has taken the opportunity to clear up a number of old disputes with Japan. This was made possible by Japan's desperate anxiety to improve its relations in at least one direction, in order to deal with such other problems as America's attitude. In almost every aspect, Soviet-Japanese differences have been adjusted on terms long set forth by the Soviet Union. In no case have China's interests been touched adversely. This process of adjustment is going forward and may finally result in a non-aggression pact. But it is hardly conceivable that China will suffer as long as she continues along the lines of progressive united resistance to Japan. Whether we regard Soviet policy as motivated simply by self-protection, by the desire to hasten world socialism, or both, the USSR could gain nothing by weakening China for the sake of Japan. On the other hand, the Japanese ruling cabal, facing military defeat and internal upheaval, might be tempted to turn from an old adventure in China toward new adventure in colony-infested southeast Asia. But with the situation as it is at present, it is hard to imagine Japan's choosing such an obvious method of committing suicide.

The Far Eastern policy of the United States, unlike that of the Soviet Union, is marked by typical contradictions. The United States government seeks, on the one hand, the preservation of American investments in China, the continued right of American merchants to profit from and develop the Chinese market, and the weakening of its rival, Japan. But the achievement of these objectives is constantly hampered by the fear that China may become completely independent and powerful enough to run its own affairs, that Japan's reactionary rulers may be overthrown and the country plunged into anti-capitalist revolution. This situation is further complicated by the fact that the United States is by all odds Japan's greatest foreign source of such vital war materials as oil, copper, scrap iron, and machinery. That trade is highly profitable to maintain, even at China's expense. Besides, to withdraw such exports through an embargo might not only weaken Japan toward China, but make Japan unavailable as an instrument of American policy in its anti-Soviet orientation.

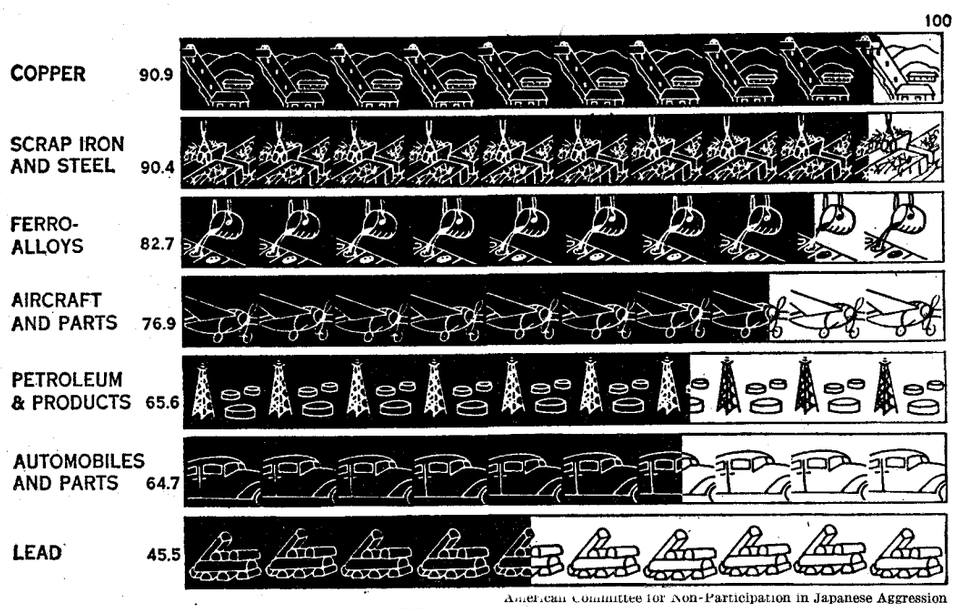
IMPERIALIST TACTICS

All these conflicting tendencies explain America's fundamental Far Eastern policy: to mediate the war in China on the basis of the weakness of both parties, placing the United States in a position of dominance over both. As payment for yielding a good part of its "gains" in China, Japan would receive extensive American loans to tide it over the difficult period of post-war readjustment. In this way it would be able to take a bite out of the apple which it has been vainly trying to swallow whole. But the United States, being an imperialist power of greater dimensions, might then swallow without difficulty the very morsel that was choking Japan. The method would not be crude aggression, but the most thoroughgoing economic exploitation of China through loans and seizure of markets. It is for these reasons that the United States this past fall has spoken so sharply to Japan at the same time that it has done so little for China. The objective is to impede the improvement of Soviet-Japanese relations, to force Japan to be "reasonable," to make a brave show before American and world public opinion.

There are, however, three flies in the ointment, which at present prevent all this from being more than an official ideal. They are: the American public's firm opposition to any sellout of China and the popular demand for an embargo on Japan; the Chinese people's continuing will to resist; and the possibility that the concessions which Japan may be willing to make will be unacceptable to the United States. In these circumstances, the expiration of the Japanese-American trade treaty on January 26 probably marked the beginning of a period of increasing ambiguity in American Far Eastern policy—at least as far as public declarations by the government are concerned. Washington will be likely to impose an embargo only if Japan enters into a non-aggression pact with the USSR. Senator Vandenberg has already made this suggestion. If Japan "behaves properly," it will probably get off with a few mild American measures or perhaps nothing except the slight inconvenience of non-treaty relations.

Naturally this international situation is very dangerous for the Chinese national front. Just as Britain and France are working night and day to prepare Scandinavia and the Balkans for involvement in the European war, so the United States (and Britain and France) will, at the "right" time, press China to yield. Though America's role may be masked as "bringing peace to the Far East," if successful it will simply lengthen the period of China's struggle for independence and bring nearer an anti-Soviet war. It would be foolish to predict just how China's united front will react to such pressure. So far it has stood the general strain. This, however, will certainly increase in intensity during the next few months. Much will depend upon the degree to which American public opinion insists upon American withdrawal of aid from Japan and increased aid to China. The immediate future of China may be decided in our congressmen's morning mail by letters from back home.

JOHN STERNE.



JAPAN'S DEPENDENCE ON THE USA. *White spaces indicate 1938 imports of essential supplies compared with share from United States. Outbreak of war increased Japan's reliance on USA, giving Washington the whiphand to influence Japan's orientation in world affairs.*

Munitions Boom

THE press reports that there are 450 munitions plants in the United States being specially guarded, day and night, by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Most of these death factories are working on rush orders for British and French imperialism and special subsidies have been provided by the imperialist powers to expand the factories. The administration, in turn, has promised lower tax rates to the munitions merchants. The U. S. Engineering and Sales Co. of 4859 Fourth Ave., Detroit, is the principal agent for Britain and France. Letters have gone out from this firm to local chambers of commerce, offering the necessary capital to convert factories for immediate arms production.

The American farmer, on the other hand, is not enjoying this gladsome prosperity. Export figures for the quarter ending November 30 show a sharp drop in agricultural products. Although cotton exports are approximately 75 percent over the same period last year, tobacco, the second most important agricultural export, has declined to $20,972,000 from the $69,746,000 of 1938. Declines of 50 percent appear in fresh fruits, wheat, and corn.

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INVASION BOGS DOWN. *Recent efforts in the direction of French Indo-China in the effort to sever frontier railways are meeting severe Chinese resistance around Nanning. Wang Ching-wei's traitor regime will "rule" the blacked-in area, harassed by guerrillas behind the lines.*

spirit, their adherence to pledges have been attested to by such leading non-Communist commentators as John Gunther, F. Tillman Durdin, Major Evans F. Carlson, Haldore Hanson, and Edgar Snow. With their firm base in the people, the Communists (as shown in NEW MASSES of January 9) in both north and central China have had a success out of all proportion to their numerical importance in the Chinese armies. Their policy is to advance the Chinese Revolution through the development of long-needed democratic changes. They have stated plainly that socialism is their ultimate but not their immediate objective. They will not use the war situation against the Kuomintang; as far as they are concerned, China will not see civil war again.

AFTER VICTORY

According to Mao Tse-tung, secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, the Communists want to continue, after the victory, their cooperation with all groups for the democratic development of the country. Their words and actions show that if the United Front is broken, it will not be the Communists' fault.

Yet one cannot be sure how long the national front will last. The reason, strangely, does not lie in China's military or domestic situation, which is generally good, despite the recent cutting of the Nanning motor road to Indo-China and the bombing of the French railway connection in that area. So far China's strategy has worked well. The war with Japan has settled down in the stalemate stage. Though Japan's conquests may look impressive when blacked in on the map, the picture is completely illusory. Japan actually gets little from the invaded areas and must lay out vast sums to continue the struggle. Although China is very far from having won the war, so long as her unity is maintained she can hardly lose.

It would be foolish to gloss over the serious economic strains which China has suffered: the loss of revenue, problems of internal transportation and of bringing supplies from abroad, difficulties in maintaining the currency, the question of what to do with On the other hand, the decentralized, primimillions or refugees from the invaded areas. tive character of Chinese economy sometimes has a beneficial effect in localizing the results of economic difficulties. The length of the war has given China an opportunity to build up her southwestern areas as far as transportation and industry are concerned.

Japan's story is entirely different. As a highly organized, capitalist nation Japan was at the height of its economic efficiency before the war began. Since then it has passed through a good part of the gamut of wartime deterioration: price increases, wage lags, shortage of essential commodities, decline of agricultural production, drop in the quality of consumption goods, shortage of labor, drainage of gold used for purchases abroad. So far the outside world has received no sign that these changes are producing a breakdown of morale. But—after two and a half years of cautiously refusing to speak of the "imminent collapse" of Japan—one wonders whether that country is not at last approaching its real crisis. There is talk in Japan now of introducing a ration-card system for rice, charcoal, clothing, sugar, and other consumption goods. Control efforts have not barred the way to price rises. The government, for fear of inflation—and for good reasons of private profit—is trying nevertheless to keep wages down. The new budget will certainly provide for increased taxes on commodities and amusements and will lower the base for income tax exemptions. The most striking fact is that in a single year (Nov. 30, 1938, to Nov. 30, 1939) the national debt rose by 34.4 percent to the unprecedented total of 20,859,000,000 yen.

WORLD WAR DANGER

All this is of course favorable to China. But the international situation that has developed along with it wears a different aspect. The Soviet-German Pact and the outbreak of the war had the effect of isolating Japan diplomatically and making it more necessary to end her war in China. These developments, however, heightened the desperate efforts of England and France to solve their imperialist conflicts through an anti-Soviet crusade. They have also brought the United States government into the vanguard of the incipient anti-Soviet bloc. This new turn became all the more important because the European war gave the United States and the Soviet Union positions of key power in the Far East.

The question therefore arises: What will happen to China during a period in which the Far East becomes ever less important in itself, for both the Soviet Union and the United States, and more than ever simply one significant factor in the working out of general world policy? With regard to the Soviet Union all the evidence emphasizes that it will continue to be China's greatest foreign supporter. The new situation in Europe brought no diminution in Soviet aid to China; it was in fact marked by Soviet actions and statements sympathetic to China. It is no accident that on Jan. 5, 1940, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet ratified the trade agreement concluded with China on June 16, 1939. This shows the continuity of Soviet policy toward China in two different periods of history.

SOVIET-JAPANESE RELATIONS

This friendship, however, is in no way incompatible with the settlement of various

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Not So Quiet on the Far Eastern Front

What goes on in China, Japan, and the U. S. State Department. The ambiguities of our Far Eastern policy. American congressmen and the fate of the Chinese people.

NOTHING reveals the imperialist nature of American foreign policy more plainly than a comparison of the administration's attitude toward Finland and toward China. With unerring instinct the President recognizes the difference between the Finnish White Guard forces and the troops of China's National United Front: the former fight the Soviet Union, the latter imperialist Japan; the former serve the banker Ryti and the czarist general Mannerheim, the latter the Chinese people. This is why the administration moves so cautiously in aiding the 400,000,000 people of China while it shows such enthusiasm for Finland's 3,500,000.

Plunder, rape, and destruction in Chinese villages touch fewer heart strings in Washington than does the presence of Soviet planes over a Finnish munitions dump.

WHAT CHINA MEANS TO US

The American people, however, cannot ignore the tremendous significance of China's struggle for themselves and the whole world. It is not simply that the Chinese are a fifth of mankind in a country larger than Europe. The whole future of Japan (one of the seven great powers) and of the entire present-day system of colonies may hinge upon the outcome of the war in the Far East. China's example can be a call to action for the oppressed peoples of Japan and southeast Asia —for the 350,000,000 in India who want some of that national independence and freedom which Chamberlain allegedly fights for in Europe.

China today holds the front on which Spain and Czechoslovakia were strangled and betrayed. It is China's struggle—not the imperialist war in Western Europe—which carries forward the fight for democracy and peace.

That China still resists, after two and a half years of Japanese invasion, is due first of all to the unity of her people, based principally upon the united front of the Kuomintang (Nationalist Party) and the Communist Party. This also includes a number of smaller political groups and important individuals, ranging from the progressive generals Li Tsung-jen and Pai Chung-hsi of Kwangsi to the old warlord Lung Yun of Yunnan Province. Since the only requirement for inclusion in the national front is a willingness to subordinate internal differences for resistance to Japan, this front is much broader and more moderate than were, for example, the People's Front governments of France and Spain. This national unity therefore embraces both those who conceive of internal reform as the basis of successful military resistance, and those who simply favor the defeat of Japan so that they may enjoy undisturbed the social, political, and economic power they wielded before the war.

OUT OF CIVIL WAR

Such a national front was of course born of blood and bitter experience, not mutual admiration. It emerged from ten years of civil war during which Chiang Kai-shek, as head of the Kuomintang government at Nanking, tried in every way to crush the Chinese Red Army, the Soviets, and the peasant movement. The effort failed—partly because of the effective guerrilla warfare waged by the Communists with the support of the local population, partly because of increasing Japanese encroachment which endangered the existence of the Nanking government. Partly, also, because of the growing demand by students, sections of the Kuomintang and the army that civil war be abandoned and resistance to Japan prepared. The civil war closed after Chiang Kai-shek's imprisonment in December 1936. When Japan attacked in July 1937 the Communist offer of unity was finally accepted. The Chinese Red Army, now renamed the Eighth Route Army, became part of the national forces; the Soviet area in the northwest was reorganized under Communist leadership as a progressive Border District.

The National United Front has weathered a series of crises, corresponding to the stages of Chinese resistance. For example, it went through the crisis of fixing the strategy of the war. The Communists and other progressive elements argued that China's weakness and Japan's strength made it necessary to avoid decisive battles wherever possible, to employ the tactic of drawing the Japanese forces deeper into the interior over a wide front. The war should be an extended one, designed to give time for building up Chinese power and securing foreign support while exhausting Japan. The conservatives opposed this, realizing that a long war could be waged only by carrying through internal reforms that would fortify the people and convince them of the desirability of fighting to the end.

DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT

Significantly, the progressive view was finally adopted, although only imperfectly. In the Eighth Route Army areas the people have acquired a new feeling of unity through the establishment, behind the Japanese lines, of a Chinese government that has reduced taxes, distributed large amounts of land, initiated democratic village government, and developed mass education. This is evidence of the revolutionary character of China's war of resistance. One must note, however, that such reforms have taken place only in some parts of the territory already lost to Japan. In other areas of the captured regions and in uninvaded China generally, the social, political, and economic relations of classes remain essentially unchanged. The landed gentry and the industrialists and bankers—formerly of the coastal cities—play an important part in the Kuomintang.

What shall we say, then, of the frequent newspaper reports of breaks in the Chinese united front?

Briefly, most of these accounts have their origin in Japanese propaganda. It is true, however, that certain reactionary local and provincial officials have at times initiated actions reminiscent of the civil war days. Within the past year, for example, the Kuomintang governors of Shensi and guerrilla Hopei have actually sent troops against the forces of the Eighth Route Army. It seems incredible that such things can happen when China is fighting for her life against Japan. But the old order dies hard—much harder than we sometimes think.

Yet it certainly is dying, though a new brief lease on life is always possible. True, there is only one Communist official in the Central Government, but many reactionary officials have lost their posts or have been transferred. If Chiang Kai-shek has been inexcusably lax in using his undeniable power to stop the attacks on Communists, he has at least held the reactionaries in check. If China has developed very slowly along the road to democracy, she has nevertheless made significant advances from what she was only a few years ago. Progress has been moderate; the United Front has held.

CHIANG KAI-SHEK

Chiang Kai-shek, never a radical, fought the Communists for ten years. He has certainly not joined the left. Rather, he seems to base his own future upon holding both right and left in check and making himself the indispensable intermediary. As far as one can tell, he has not since the beginning of the war wavered in his determination to resist Japan; he appears, in fact, to have committed himself to a fight to victory. This attitude was made plain in his strong speech of Nov. 12, 1939, to the Central Executive Committee of the Kuomintang. In the sphere of foreign relations, it was underlined by the warm greeting to Joseph Stalin on the latter's birthday, December 21.

The Communists, urging ever stronger resistance to Japan, have observed the utmost loyalty to the national front. Their firmness in waging the struggle, their self-sacrificing

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Millennium

Ad Reinhardt

and equality." Those words, if fulfilled, sought to avoid the unequal obligations assumed by Poland and Great Britain during the German-Polish war. The Soviet did not intend to serve the Western powers in the Polish style under any conditions.

Incidentally, Fischer's belated defense of British policy during the Anglo-Soviet negotiations coincides exactly with British propaganda at the time which not even a supporter of the government like Lord Lothian, let alone politicians like Winston Churchill or Lloyd George, could accept. Lothian strongly criticized the "guarantees" on the ground that neither Britain nor France could enforce them. As late as June, Churchill wrote that he preferred the Soviet proposals. Lloyd George savagely condemned the government as "demented." Fischer, however, went back to the crudest and most abject defense of the Chamberlain policy by merely repeating the original propaganda explanation that the "guarantee" to Poland was *ipso facto* a "guarantee" to the Soviet Union. Indeed, the Chamberlain government itself moved away from this position after the first few weeks of the negotiations and accepted portions of the Soviet plan. If Fischer doesn't watch out, the British ambassador in Washington will be calling him a stupid reactionary.

THEODORE DRAPER.

This is the first of three articles by Mr. Draper. The second will appear next week.

Ex-Mayor Sees through It

THE *Tri-County Herald*, labor weekly of Jamestown, Olean, Warren, and Corry, N. Y., has a "Column of Independent Thought" by Samuel A. Carlson, former mayor of Jamestown. In a recent issue the independent ex-mayor made the following comment on Finland:

> The warmongers have taken advantage of the sympathy of the democratic nations for "poor little Finland" to promote a stampede of such nations into a holy war against Russia. But it is well not to lose sight of the fact that it was the liberal element of the people in both Finland and Sweden who advised the "Helsinki government" to accept the Soviet proposal for an exchange of a few small tracts of land in preference to a resort to the horrors of war. And that it was English, French, and Italian influence that precipitated this conflict. Just as they did over "poor little Belgium" twenty years ago.
>
> These tory and fascist statesmen are now seeking to enlist the United States in a war on the Soviet Union in the name of religion.
>
> Is there any reason why American boys should be sent to the fields of slaughter over religious ideologies in Russia any more than it would be to wage war against the Hindus because their religious beliefs are in conflict with ours?

Handy Blackout

A TRAVELER who was in London at the outbreak of the war reports that he went to bed on the 3rd, the day war had been declared, and set his alarm for 3:00 a.m. in order to hear President Roosevelt's radio speech. At 3:00 he was awakened by air raid sirens. He ran to the shelter and the sirens continued for twenty minutes. The all-clear signal came immediately after the President's speech was over. Few people in England heard the speech. The next day's papers had cautious summaries of it.

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attention to British policy even to the point of antagonism, all because Finland refused the Soviet offers. Accordingly, these (literally) poor, little nations were able to do much better than France, incomparably greater than they. Fischer himself throughout the Spanish war repeatedly condemned France's submission to British demands. The assumption that the Baltic states were any more independent is fantastic. They resisted the Soviet proposals because Britain intrigued to make it so, and they accepted only when the Soviet occupation of eastern Poland shoved Britain out of the picture.

Witness this. On June 1, Foreign Minister Selter of Estonia refused to accept any kind of a "guarantee" of his country's independence and threatened to consider such assistance as an act of aggression. His statement was made in an interview in the *Baltic Times,* an English paper published in Tallinn, financed and controlled by British interests. Nobody misinterpreted the significance of Selter's choice of publication. If Britain lacked the strength to "persuade" a Selter to accept Soviet aid, she evidently had the strength to "persuade" him to reject it. If combined Anglo-Soviet "persuasion" wouldn't have worked, doesn't Fischer himself admit that Soviet "persuasion" alone later changed Selter's attitude?

ERKKO'S TESTIMONY

The Finnish example confirms this standpoint rather than the contrary. Finland rejected relatively mild Soviet proposals for the same reason as the other three Baltic states before her, and she chose to fight because Britain would not draw back on account of Finland's superior position and defensive possibilities. Even before the Soviet-Finnish negotiations, Great Britain and Finland worked in collusion to break down the Anglo-Soviet negotiations. On August 20, three days before the German-Soviet Pact, Foreign Minister Erkko of Finland made an indiscreet speech in which he revealed that Britain refused to guarantee the Soviet's Finnish border. He coolly boasted that this point blocked an Anglo-Soviet agreement. He thanked the British in these words: "This proves that the British government has not been indifferent to Finnish interests and actually, in this respect, has safeguarded Finland's rights."

Why should the British government have been indifferent to "Finnish interests" when Finland was an economic colony and a political vassal of the Western powers? Consider that $40,000,000 worth of arms which they sent into Finland before anybody heard of fighting there. Why not safeguard "Finland's rights" when they owned the voting-stock in that branch outlet of the capitalist world order?

4. The most important issue, however, lies in the opening two sentences. At this point, they ought to be reread:

> By giving pledges of protection to Poland and subsequently to Rumania the British and French were actually undertaking to protect the western frontier of Russia. The guarantees to Poland and Rumania were *ipso facto* guarantees to the Soviet government.

Fischer added this comment for emphasis:

> The crux of the entire Russo-German pact is that the guarantee to Poland was the reverse of "Munich." If the purpose of Munich was to direct German expansion eastward against the Soviet Union, then the British pledge to Poland was insane, certainly inconsistent.

If Fischer can be shown wrong, then, on his own ground, the issue is joined on "the crux of the entire Russo-German pact." Let that stand.

We no longer need to guess about some things. The Polish government definitely expected Anglo-French military assistance against Germany. On September 1, immediately after Germany attacked, Foreign Minister Beck gave Sir Howard Kennard, British ambassador in Warsaw, to understand that he hoped "his majesty's government will take some action of a military character to relieve the pressure on this field of operations [Poland]." On September 2, Beck renewed the demand in terms of British aerial action against Germany. Kennard himself expected such aid from Britain because he added his support to Beck's message.

We know that Poland received no such aid. If they had intended to give it, the Western powers had plenty of time between March 31 and September 1 to find a way or to disillusion Poland. They did neither. They encouraged the Poles, then abandoned them.

Another thing. On September 7, Poland received a cash credit of £5,000,000 from the British government. Did a penny of that money ever reach Warsaw? Positively not. Only after Poland's collapse, the Sikorski emigre "Cabinet" began to receive driblets of it. Sir John Simon admitted this in Parliament on October 17.

BECK GUESSED WRONG

What bearing have these facts on "the crux of the entire Russo-German pact"? The British "guarantee" to Poland of March 31 fooled nobody but the Polish government. The over-clever Beck actually based his policy, after March, on the execution of the British pledge and felt safe as long as he had it. He tried to avoid dependence on Germany or the Soviet Union by increasing Poland's dependence on Great Britain. The British government, aware of Beck's trust, made absolutely no military plans or preparations to honor its pledge. Not that he didn't deserve it, but the British led him down the road of disaster.

Let alone protecting the Soviet Union's western frontier, the British "guarantee" to Poland didn't even protect Poland. At best, then, if "the guarantees to Poland and Rumania were *ipso facto* guarantees to the Soviet government," the latter was very wise to reject such charity on the grounds that it could not be fulfilled and that the Western powers didn't intend to fulfill it.

Assume that the Soviet government foolishly accepted the Polish "guarantee" as a guarantee of its western frontier. In that case, within two weeks of the German invasion of Poland, Germany and the Soviet Union would have been at war with each other. How much aid did the Western powers give Poland? Nothing. Is there any reason to suspect that they would have given more aid to the Soviet Union? Obviously not.

In other words, the unequal conditions of the German-Polish war would have been reproduced in a German-Soviet war. Despite appearances, Germany fought a strictly localized war in Poland just as she planned. The stalemate in the West forced Poland to deal with Germany alone. Now Beck refused to accept direct Soviet military aid. By that rejection, he doomed the Polish state. If the Soviet had accepted the British "guarantee," the Red Army would have had to wait until the Reichswehr had conquered Poland and was ready to continue the war in the East on Soviet soil. Meanwhile, also, the stalemate in the West continued so that, in effect, the Western powers would have been spectators at a German-Soviet war as they were spectators at the German-Polish war.

In order to safeguard against this virtual conversion of a British "guarantee" to Poland into a German-Soviet war, the Soviet government made two general proposals. The first asked the Western powers to "guarantee" the Soviet Union directly in the form of a mutual assistance pact against aggression backed up by three-power "guarantees" against aggression to the states of Central and Eastern Europe. The Soviet, in fact, wanted no more than Britain and France agreed to give Turkey in May. The second called for a military convention to settle the concrete forms and extent of the obligations assumed by the three powers. The Soviets evidently foresaw the futility of Poland's trust in a paper "guarantee." They sought direct and immediate means to oppose the aggressor from the very beginning. This was impossible as long as countries like Finland, Poland, and Rumania refused to admit the Red Army in a collective defense. For the Soviet to wait for direct invasion before fighting meant that the Germans would have fought a series of localized wars before reaching the Soviet border and then that the Soviet would have had to fight as far from German soil as possible. On the contrary, they intended to prevent easy, localized victories and to fight as far from Soviet soil as possible.

TRAP FOR POLAND

The British pledge to Poland, without an Anglo-Soviet mutual assistance pact, was not the reverse of "Munich." It was not inconsistent and certainly not insane from the tory point of view. It was a trap for Poland and a snare for the Soviet Union. During the negotiations in Moscow, the Soviet government constantly insisted on "reciprocity

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Falsifying History

Theodore Draper separates fact from fiction in a three-part survey of recent European events. Who put Poland on the spot? Louis Fischer translates the Gospel according to St. Neville.

THE anti-Soviet hysteria bears all the marks of a boom industry. It has no real basis in fact but that does not stop the traffic in its peculiar commodities from rising to unknown and dangerously high levels. The leading producers are piling up a record inventory of fake pictures, fake reports, and fake editorials of sympathy for poor, little ruritanic Finland, the happy, peaceful, independent nation that never was.

So that the customers won't get tired, or still worse, suspicious, all sorts of subtle variations and skillful improvements are thrown on the market at moderate intervals. As if the present weren't enough, the whole past is being raked up to break down the public's notorious sales-resistance. The best salesmen work on the principle that the Soviets today are just a mite better than baby-eaters, have always been and will always be like that. Thus they cover the most territory. Naturally, they charge as much as the traffic will bear.

It has reached a point where some of them are getting too careless for their own good. In three long articles in the *Nation,* Louis Fischer recently reconstructed the post-Munich history of Europe in such a way as to throw the maximum blame on the Soviet Union (his mealticket until he just as profitably adopted the cause of a certain faction in loyalist Spain) and to absolve the French and British governments. In order to turn the trick, Fischer made March 31, 1939, into a sacred date. The German Army marched into Prague on March 15, and Fischer held that Prime Minister Chamberlain immediately, or within two weeks, experienced a complete conversion. In his own words:

> **The result of the new spirit in London and Paris was the British guarantee to Poland on March 31, 1939, to fight Germany in case Germany assaulted Polish independence. That day is the historic dividing line in the post-war (pre-war) history of Europe.**

But at that very moment, or soon thereafter, Louis Fischer happened to be on the spot in Western Europe. Did he notice "the new spirit in London and Paris"? In an article from Paris on "Chamberlain's Choice," written on April 12 (the *Nation,* April 29, 1939), he said:

> **as long as the spirit prevailing in London and Paris makes it possible for people to say, Well, we could not have gone to war for the Sudeten province, and we cannot start a world conflagration for the sake of Albania or Memel or Danzig or Croatia or Lithuania, the fascists can still carry on.**

And he also wrote that:

> **the paradox is that the non-aggressors still refuse to unite against forces that wish to destroy them, that are rotten within, and that are not prepared to fight a long, widespread war. They have no agreement with Russia. They allow Beck to play his own game with Hungary and Rumania, etc., etc.**

In other words, writing two weeks after the "guarantee," Fischer found no such new spirit as conveniently appeared in retrospect long after the event. It is legitimate to wonder whether he did not revise his earlier impression because his own, rather than Chamberlain's, spirit had changed in the meantime. I happened to be in London for some time before and after March 31 and I know from personal experience (though that is not necessary because the Parliamentary Debates between March and September tell the same story) that practically the entire Opposition suspected the prime minister's methods and motives on the "guarantee," while most privately or publicly condemned the action as a dangerous, two-faced ruse.

THEY KNEW CHAMBERLAIN

In July 1939, I had a personal conversation with Ellen Wilkinson, one of the shrewdest Laborites, in the House of Parliament. She expressed the flat opinion that come what might, Chamberlain would not sign any sort of agreement with the Soviet Union. She told me that she knew the man and his backers, had watched them closely for many years and believed that no man and no social grouping on earth were motivated by deeper hatred against socialism and the Soviet state than they. Her opinion was that of every independent and liberal observer in London and Paris and I bring it up now only for that reason. Even Louis Fischer agreed until he came to revise the history of Europe along with his own.

Why was the "guarantee" a ruse? Upon this question hinges Fischer's entire interpretation, or rather, reinterpretation, of the event. His passage on the problem is of peculiar importance for yet another reason. By examining it, we may get some notion of Fischer's amazing "freedom" in his treatment of the entire period. I therefore prefer to quote his own explanation of the "guarantee" before criticizing it and I hope that the reader will go through the passage with some care though it is rather long:

> **By giving pledges of protection to Poland and subsequently to Rumania the British and French were actually undertaking to protect the western frontier of Russia. The guarantees to Poland and Rumania were *ipso facto* guarantees to the Soviet government. Accordingly, when in May the British opened negotiations with the Soviet government in Moscow about a mutual-assistance treaty, the Russians felt that they had already received from England for nothing almost everything that England could give them. The guarantees to Poland and Rumania came too quickly for the successful conduct of the conversations with Moscow. Now if the British desired help from the USSR they had to offer something over and beyond the guarantees of the Soviet-Polish and Soviet-Rumanian frontiers. Moscow asked concessions in the Baltic area. The stubborn resistance of Finland to Russia's demands suggests that it would have been extremely difficult for England to persuade the three other Baltic states—Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia—to accept the infringement of their sovereignty which Moscow later wrung from them under the threat of force.**

There are four things to say about this version, starting with the least important.

1. The negotiations in Moscow opened in April, not May. (Incidentally, errors of this kind abound in the articles, e.g., the date of Litvinov's resignation in the second article.)

2. According to the third and fourth sentences, Britain mistakenly gave the guarantees "too quickly" for effective bargaining power with the USSR. But, mark this. On March 18, the British ambassador in Moscow informed the Soviet government that there were serious grounds for suspecting an attack against Rumania and invited it to define its attitude in such event. That very evening the Soviet government, in reply, proposed a conference, preferably in Bucharest, of the six most interested powers (Great Britain, France, Poland, Turkey, Rumania, and the USSR) to decide upon appropriate defense measures in behalf of Rumania. Within twenty-four hours, Lord Halifax condemned the Soviet proposal as "premature." Instead, Halifax suggested that four powers (France, Great Britain, Poland, and the USSR) sign a declaration of intention to consult together *after* another aggression. This proposal reached Moscow on March 21 and it was immediately criticized as "inadequate" but accepted for want of better. This plan failed because Poland refused to go along on the grounds that a declaration involved "undesirable publicity."

INSTEAD OF NEGOTIATIONS

This little episode makes nonsense out of Fischer's claim that Britain could only have negotiated with the Soviets if she had not been so hasty about handing out her "guarantees." On March 18, the Soviet government gave her just that opportunity and it was rejected. The British government deliberately chose to ignore Moscow in the matter of the "guarantees," and gave them, from one aspect, as an alternative to negotiations involving the Soviet Union.

If Fischer had written, "The guarantees to Poland and Rumania came too quickly *in order to avoid* the successful conduct of the conversations with Moscow," he would have come closer to the truth.

3. In the final sentence, Fischer claimed that Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia paid no

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